



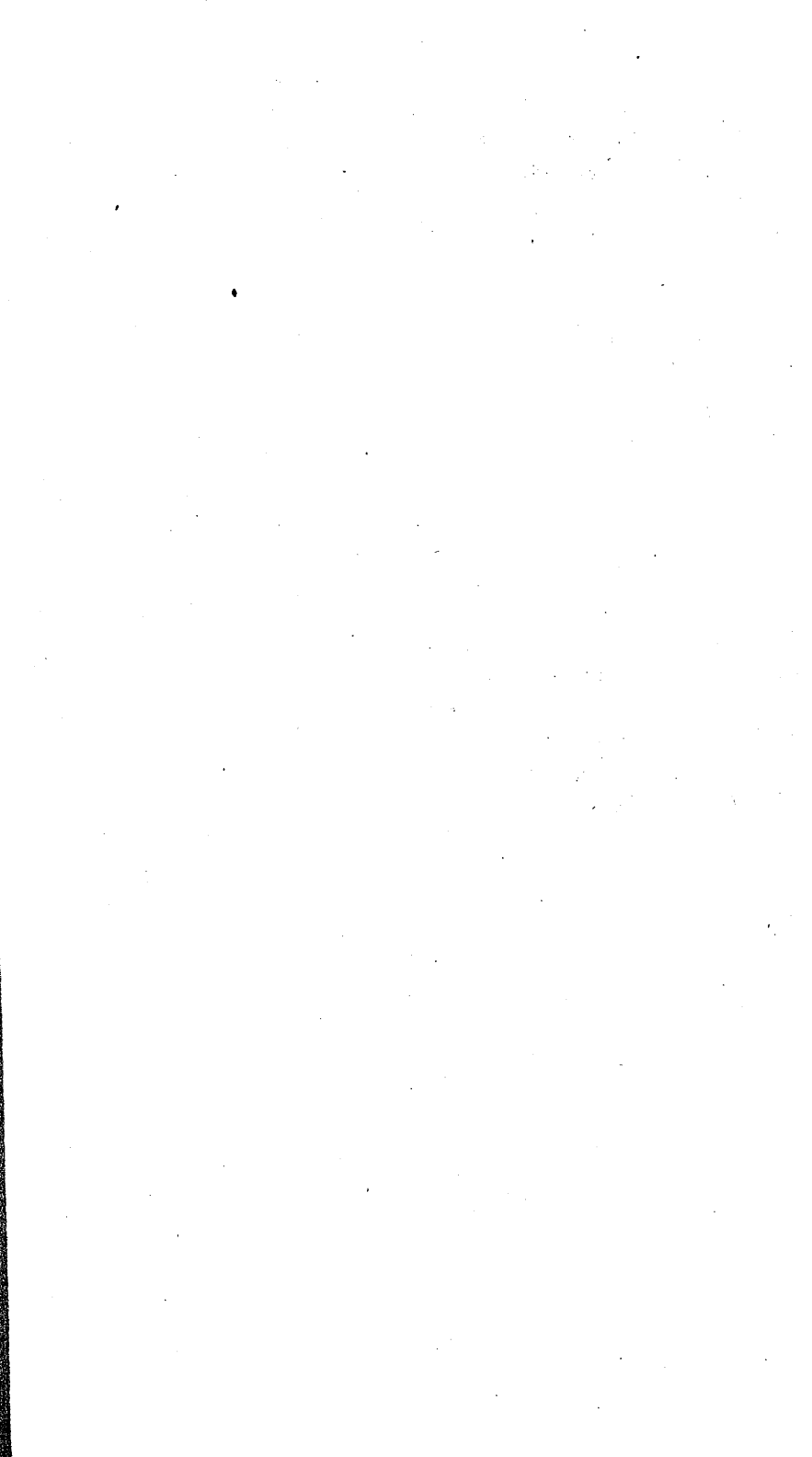
The Rural Church in China

FRANK WILSON PRICE



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THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

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A SURVEY

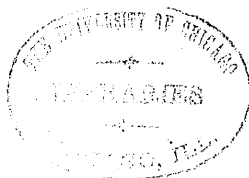
By FRANK WILSON PRICE
¹¹
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FOREWORD

Rural Community is the foundation of the Chinese nation. For forty centuries agriculture has been the basis of Chinese life. Peasants and farmers still number 80 per cent of the population. The salvation of China and her people lies therefore in rural reconstruction and the spiritual regeneration of the masses. A large number of the Chinese churches are in the rural areas. The church should become the center of the community and the fountain, from which flows the living water that will quicken the lives of the people who are known as "farmers of four thousand years."

Dr. Frank W. Price has been for many years a missionary in China. He has identified himself with the people whom he serves and with whom he works. His book on the rural churches of China, packed with valuable facts and data is an authoritative source book on this subject. The book was published in China before World War II, but unfortunately the entire stock was burned during the war. It is of great significance that it is now reprinted in *The World Mission of Christianity* series of the International Missionary Council. This book will not only serve as a guidepost for the Christian movement in China; it also furnishes abundant ideas and inspiration for rural churches in other mission lands.

W. Y. CHEN

*Honorary General Secretary of the
National Christian Council of China*

September 6, 1947.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

The first edition of this book was published by Kelly and Walsh, Ltd., Shanghai, in 1941. All copies were in the hands of the binder when, on December 8, Japanese forces took over the International Settlement.

Shortly after the Japanese surrender in August, 1945, I returned from West China to Shanghai by air. On visiting the reopened offices of Kelly and Walsh, I discovered that all their books, both those on the shelves and those in the process of publication, had disappeared during the Japanese occupation. The only printed copy of this book in existence was a final proof which had been sent to me at Chengtu; and fortunately copies of the manuscript were available both in West China and in the United States.

With the encouragement and assistance of Mr. John H. Reisner, Executive Secretary of Agricultural Missions, Inc., and other friends, a second edition, and the first for distribution, is now being included in the "World Mission of Christianity" series of the International Missionary Council.

The survey upon which this book is based was made in 1936-1937, ten years ago and before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War. And yet the book does not seem out of date. The picture it gives of the rural church in China before the storm is of historical interest and value; but more than that it reveals what we have to start with in the years of rebuilding. The interpretations drawn from the study appear as valid today as they were a decade ago and should help in determining policies and methods of advance in the post-war period. Moreover, the plan and procedure used in this survey may be suggestive to Christian rural workers in other countries than China.

I had hoped to make another study in 1947 of the 73 rural churches which were intensively surveyed in 1937. But the disturbed conditions in parts of China and the fact that one-fourth of these churches are now in Communist-controlled territory, make such a new study and comparison impossible at the present time. However, I have added a chapter, "The Rural Church in China During and After the War" which describes in general the effect of the

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

war and its aftermath upon rural churches and various plans and efforts for rehabilitation. Chinese characters have been omitted in the American edition. Otherwise the book is as it was first written in 1938 and published in 1941.

FRANK W. PRICE

Richmond, Virginia

August 15, 1947

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Foreword by Bishop W. Y. Chen</i>	v
<i>Preface to Second Edition</i>	vii
<i>Introduction</i>	i

SURVEY I

EXTENSIVE SURVEY OF EAST CHINA CHURCHES

<i>Distribution of Rural Churches in Anhwei, Kiangsu and Chekiang</i>	13
Purpose and Procedure, 13	
Interpretations and Conclusions, 14	
Tables	

SURVEY II

INTENSIVE SURVEY OF 73 RURAL CHURCHES

<i>Case Studies of the Environment and Program of 73 Rural Churches</i>	23
Method of Survey, 23	
Outline of the Survey, 23	
Reliability of the Data, 25	
List of Rural Churches Surveyed, 29	

PART I

<i>The Rural Community</i>	37
I. Community and Parish Maps, 39	
II. The Church Community, 40	

- III. General Survey of Community Conditions—The Environment of the Church, 45
 1. Historical, 45
 2. Geographical and Topographical, 46
 3. Population, 47
 4. Political, 51
 5. Agricultural and Industrial, 53
 6. Economic and Commercial, 55
 7. Social Conditions (social organizations, family, customs), 59
 8. Recreation, 62
 9. Health Factors, 64
 10. Communication and Transportation, 66
 11. Cultural and Educational Factors, 67
 12. Leadership Factors, 69
 13. Moral Conditions and Problems, 73
 14. Religious Conditions, 76

PART II

- | | |
|--|----|
| <i>Rural Reconstruction in the Community</i> | 83 |
|--|----|

PART III

- | | |
|--|----|
| <i>The Church: Studies of 73 Sample Rural Churches</i> | 85 |
|--|----|

- I. History, 85
- II. Membership and Constituency, 93
 1. Maps of Church Membership, 93
 2. Survey of Church Membership as a Whole, 94
 3. Survey of Inquirers and Catechumens, 108
 4. (Data Omitted)
 5. Study of Church Constituency, 111
- III. Property and Equipment, 113
- IV. Leadership, Ecclesiastical Organization and Church Polity, 117
 1. Denominational Organization and Supervision, 117
 2. Organization of the Local Church, 123
 3. Resident Pastor or Preacher (salaried worker), 123
 4. Other Resident Paid Workers or Helpers, 136
 5. Lay-worker in Charge, 137
 6. Inner Organization of the Church Officers and Voluntary Workers, 139

CONTENTS

V. Finance, 142	
1. Financial Statement for Previous Year, 146	
2. Financial Statement of Special Projects, 149	
3. New Construction, Equipment and Repairs, 149	
4. Church Member Contributions, 153	
5. Methods of Raising and Disbursing Funds, 160	
6. Achieving Self-Support, 165	
VI. Church Life and Work (Program of the Church), 169	
1. Education, 172	
2. Religious Education, 174	
A. Literacy Education for Christians, 174	
B. Preparation of Inquirers for Membership, 178	
C. Training of Church Members and Their Families, 187	
D. Religious Education in the Family, 201	
E. Special Work for Children of the Community, 205	
F. Special Work for Youth, 207	
G. Use of Literature and Art in Religious Education, 209	
H. Special Work for Women, 209	
I. Special Institutes or Periods of Religious Training for Members, 209	
J. Community Religious Education, 209	
3-5. (Data Omitted)	
6. Sundays and Other Special Days, 209	
7. Community Service, 216	

PART IV

<i>Summary, Conclusions and Proposals</i>	221
Supplementary Chapter— <i>The Rural Church in China During and After the War</i>	227
<i>Maps</i>	245
<i>Bibliography</i>	263
<i>Index</i>	269

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

INTRODUCTION

I. *Statement of Purpose*

This volume embodies studies which the writer has made or directed during the past five years, while teaching in the Rural Church Department of the Nanking Theological Seminary. The aim of the studies has been to discover and interpret facts regarding the development of Protestant rural churches in China.

One of the most significant trends in modern Christianity is the renewed emphasis upon the local church. This is especially true in the missionary movement. Professor K. S. Latourette says, "If we have been at all accurate in analyzing the conditions of the new day, it must be clear that in it the primary object of the missionary enterprise must be to strengthen the ongoing Christian communities in these lands of the younger churches. This does not mean that the evangelization of the world or a ministry to the needs of the nation or of society as a whole should be neglected. It does mean that only as vigorous and growing Christian communities exist can these goals be attained . . . More and more the task (of the missionary) must be to reinforce the efforts of the local Christian communities and to strengthen them and broaden their vision . . . Increasingly the determining question of all mission programs must be: What will most contribute to an ongoing Christian community?"¹

China is predominantly an agricultural country. And the Protestant church in China is predominantly rural. Of the 15,000 churches, chapels and places of worship which have been established in China, two-thirds or more are in rural communities, in communities where farming is the major occupation. Most of these churches have a history of less than fifty years. Many questions arise as one considers their situation at the present time and their possibilities in the future. What is the relation of these little Christian societies to the community life in which they have been so recently planted? To what extent do they embody the Christian faith and life of the historical and universal church or

¹ Latourette, K. S., *Missions Tomorrow*, p. 168.

of particular western denominations, and to what extent are they becoming rooted in the distinctive life and culture of their own immediate environment? What are the major emphases now in the work of rural churches in China, and how are aims and methods being modified by new conditions? What changes in form or work are taking place due to political or social revolutions or to revisions of mission policy? What types of leadership do these rural churches have or do they need in order that they may make their largest contribution to the Christian movement as a whole and also to rural betterment and national rebuilding? What have been the varying policies of extension, administration and finance in rural work, and what can be learned from the results in different churches to guide us in future planning and action? What part will rural churches play in the conservation of China's great spiritual heritage, and in the laying of moral and spiritual foundations for the new social order? These are some of the many questions which Christian workers in rural China are beginning to consider. They call for clear answers based upon adequate information and for wise interpretation of facts and trends.

The studies summarized in this volume will, it is hoped, furnish some needed information upon the existing situation and also throw some light upon questions of future mission and church policy. Since Christian leaders in India, Korea and other lands of the younger churches are facing many similar problems, it is hoped that these studies may be of value to them as well as to those who are serving in China.

As the world Christian fellowship becomes a growing actuality, the exchange of thought and experience between different countries, particularly between those countries where the church has been planted and is developing in new social environments, is of increasing importance. Hence it was decided that these studies should be carried on in cooperation with the preparation of preliminary reports for the world meeting of the International Missionary Council to be held at Madras, India, in December, 1938.

2. *Previous Studies of the Rural Church in China*

In the early decades of Protestant missions in China little distinction was made between city work and rural work. Christianity

touched the port cities and larger centers first but an extension of evangelistic effort to the large rural area took place as rapidly as conditions would permit. At first there was practically no difference in methods of work in the cities and in the villages. But as Christian institutional work developed in the larger centers of population—schools and colleges, hospitals and institutional churches—there came the realization that evangelism in the villages called for somewhat different methods and different types of leadership and program.

The monumental survey, "The Christian Occupation in China," made in preparation for the National Christian Conference of 1922, called attention to the distinctive needs of rural areas. This survey revealed that only 6 per cent of the total population of China resided in 176 cities of over 50,000 population; yet 66 per cent of the missionary body, 34 per cent of the Chinese Christian workers, and 24 per cent of the church members, resided in these same urban centers.² "A large proportion, perhaps 75 per cent of the communicants, are found in *country* churches . . . Members live at a distance from the church center and in scattered groups."³ One section of the survey was devoted to agricultural missions which was then a comparatively new development, and which centered chiefly in two Christian agricultural colleges and a small number of Christian middle schools with rural interest, and in a few mission stations with agricultural missionaries in residence.⁴

The National Christian Council organized a special committee on rural work in 1923, and appointed a Rural Work Secretary in 1930. During the past fifteen years there have been held in many parts of China an increasing number of conferences and institutes on the work of the rural church. Some interesting local or regional studies have been made in connection with these.⁵ Stimulated both by a fresh consciousness of needs and problems within the church and by the rising tide of interest in rural reconstruction throughout China, many church groups have been pioneering in fresh ways of approach to the rural community, or in new ways of strengthening the program of existing rural churches. Christian colleges have led the way in research upon agricultural, social and economic as-

² Stauffer, M. T., Ed., *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. 385.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 392.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 421-423.

⁵ E.g. *The Report of the Tungchow Conference on Rural Work* (Shanghai, 1935).

pects of rural life.⁶ Many Christian schools have been conducting small local experiments in rural service. To the reports of these studies and experiments are now added a growing volume of material gathered by government and private agencies and the records of all kinds of experiments in rural education, agricultural improvement, rural reconstruction and county government.

The reports of the Jerusalem Conference in 1928 reflected the growing interest in China, as in other lands, in the opportunities before the rural church.⁷ Following this Conference, Dr. Kenyon S. Butterfield visited several Far Eastern countries including China. The results of his interesting observations are found in the book, "The Rural Mission of the Church in Eastern Asia."⁸

The most comprehensive and useful survey of rural Christian work in recent years was that made by Professor W. A. Anderson of Cornell University, a member of the Fact-Finders Commission of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry. His report on "Rural Conditions and Missionary Work" summarizes much valuable data regarding social and economic factors which influence Christian rural work and regarding conditions at that time in the churches.⁹ But, because of limited time, Professor Anderson was not able to study conditions in all parts of China or all phases of rural church life; and some of his conclusions are open to criticism.

3. *History and Scope of This Survey*

From 1931 to 1933 the studies which the Rural Church Department of the Nanking Theological Seminary carried on were limited to the experimental parish and Rural Training Center at Shunhwachen.¹⁰ We soon came to realize, however, that a broader under-

⁶ The most outstanding studies have been those directed by Professor J. Lossing Buck, Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Nanking. His *Chinese Farm Economy* has become a standard work. A comprehensive survey which has taken several years to complete, is now off the press. (Shanghai, 1938. University of Chicago, 1938.)

⁷ *The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, 1928 Report*, Vol. VI, *The Christian Mission in Relation to Rural Problems*.

⁸ Butterfield, K. S., *The Rural Mission of the Church in Eastern Asia, Report and Recommendations*, 1937.

⁹ *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact Finders' Reports*, Vol. V, Part II, "Rural Conditions and Missionary Work," pp. 176-224. Vol. II, Part I, also has a chapter, "Agriculture and Rural Life in Relation to the Missionary Enterprise," which summarizes Anderson's data and conclusions. Pp. 1-35.

¹⁰ A full report of the research, experiments and training program at Shunhwachen may be found in an English Bulletin published by the Rural Church Department in 1936, *Shunhwachen Rural Training Center of Nanking Theological Seminary*.

standing of the rural church problem throughout China was essential to the development of our own experimental program and also to the education of men for rural service in different parts of the country.

In the two years between 1933 and 1935 we constructed the survey schedules which have been used in the studies here reported. Survey forms and the results of church surveys in western countries, especially in the United States, were consulted. The surveys of E. D. Brunner, H. N. Morse and C. L. Fry were of particular help. Brunner's study of the rural church in Korea, Thomas Jesse Jones' research into educational conditions and problems in Africa, and Pickett's valuable study of Christian mass movements in India, furnished many suggestions as to outline and procedure.¹¹ Numerous books, magazine articles and reports, both English and Chinese, bearing upon the environment, work and problems of rural churches in China, were read in order that the schedules and questions might be made to fit the situation in China as a whole and in churches of various types. Field trips and observations gave further help.

The aim as then envisaged was to make an extensive survey of one selected region of China and an intensive survey of one hundred sample churches, in as many provinces and denominational groups as possible. As we wrote in the Foreword to the Rural Church Survey Schedule, "The report of the work of at least one hundred representative churches—strong and weak, successful and failing, dependent upon outside support and self-sustaining, hopeful and discouraged—should furnish many lessons for all rural churches which are working for rural betterment and for the coming of the Kingdom of God. The stories of how these churches were planted and of how they are growing, of how they are now witnessing and serving, and of the difficulties and obstacles they are overcoming, will make a valuable record." We felt the need also of studying the local church as a whole in its community as a whole, and the interrelations between community and church. How are these new churches influencing and being influenced by the old

¹¹ Brunner, E. de S., *Rural Korea; A preliminary survey of economic, social and religious conditions* (1928).

Pickett, J. W., *Christian Mass Movement in India; A Study with Recommendations* (1933).

Jones, Thomas Jesse, *Education in Africa* (1922). *Education in East Africa* (1925).

rural culture about them? The study promised to be of interest not only to Christian rural workers and teachers of theological students, but also to rural sociologists and to students of contemporary church history and missions.

The survey schedules, in tentative form, were submitted to many friends for criticisms and suggestions, including: Dr. J. Lossing Buck, Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Nanking; Dr. Leonard S. Hsu, formerly Head of the Department of Sociology at Yenching University, now in the National Economic Council and Ministry of Industries; Mr. Fuliang Chang, formerly Secretary for Rural work of the National Christian Council, now Secretary of Rural Service Centers under the National Economic Council, Kiangsi; Dr. Chester S. Miao, Executive Secretary, National Committee on Christian Religious Education; Dr. Frank Rawlinson, late Editor of *The Chinese Recorder*; Dr. D. Willard Lyon, formerly secretary of the National Committee of Y.M.C.A.'s in China and director of many research and literary projects; Dr. Ralph C. Wells, Chairman of the China Council, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and others.

After revision, the schedules, in both English and Chinese, were mimeographed, and tested out in a few selected churches near Nanking. Further changes were made, in the light of survey experience. Finally, Survey Schedule A was published in June, 1936, in English and Chinese editions.¹²

Plans for making a nation-wide study had been delayed for lack of sufficient funds. It was decided to start in a simple way in the east China area. Mr. J. Merle Davis, representing the Department of Industrial and Social Research of the International Missionary Council, visited China in the autumn of 1936 and proposed that the scope of the survey be widened, with the help of funds he might provide, and that the results be made available as one of the preliminary studies before the World Missionary Conference. This offer was most welcome, and an agreement was reached which read in part, "The Rural Church Department of Nanking Theological Seminary agrees to cooperate with the Department of Social and Industrial Research in the effort to extend the Rural Church Survey into other parts of China; north, south, east and west; in the conviction that for its findings to be considered conclusive the

¹² Rural Church Survey Schedule, Nanking Theological Seminary, 1936.

Survey needs to be given the widest possible scope throughout China." Some additional questions were suggested by Mr. Davis and added on a stencilled sheet.

Dr. Ralph A. Felton, Professor of the Rural Church at Drew Theological Seminary, spent the year 1936-1937 at Nanking Theological Seminary as visiting professor and gave valuable assistance in the preparations for the survey.

4. *Procedure*

Over two hundred personal letters were sent to a selected group of missionaries and Chinese Christian workers—teachers, district superintendents, church secretaries and others—all over China, asking for their cooperation in making a survey of one hundred representative rural churches. Letters were sent to every province and to every denomination which is carrying on rural work to any extent. If a favorable reply was received, and an individual or group of persons agreed to conduct a survey of one church and its community in their area, then copies of the survey forms in both English and Chinese and a leaflet, "Instructions to Surveyors" were immediately forwarded. In addition, twenty churches were selected for study by the staff and graduates and students of the Rural Church Department of Nanking Theological Seminary.

Actual survey work began in December, 1936. The response to the request for assistance from missionary and Chinese co-workers everywhere was most encouraging, especially in view of the fact that a thorough study of one rural community and church according to the questionnaire prepared would require a week or ten days of full-time effort. But many saw the need and value of such a study and gladly offered to help. When I left China on May 28, 1937, 122 churches were on the survey list and were being studied. They represented 16 provinces and 36 denominational groups. Surveyors were being sought to study 14 more churches, especially in the outlying provinces. Fifteen of the case studies had already been completed and the remainder were to be finished and sent in during the summer.

Two general follow-up letters were sent to surveyors, for encouragement and with further information and suggestions. In field trips to north China, east China and central China during the first five months of 1937, I conferred with over fifty persons taking part

in surveys, and on June 1 I met with a group at Canton who were making studies in Kwangtung province. I worked with the staff of our Department and a group of Seminary students on surveys of several churches in the east China area. Ten students who had received special training surveyed individual churches in the spring and summer of 1937.

The Sino-Japanese War which began on July 7, 1937, interrupted some of the survey work during the summer and prevented the mailing of completed or partially completed surveys from certain regions. However, 73 completed schedules were received in the U. S. A. up to the end of December, 1937, and these form the basis of the report in this volume. Although the number is less than the anticipated one hundred, yet 73 are sufficient to furnish a large amount of data and to present a cross-section picture of rural communities and rural churches in China. That so many could be completed and mailed to the United States under war conditions is a remarkable evidence of the interest in such a study. These 73 schedules represent 13 provinces and 25 mission or denominational groups.

At the same time that the intensive study was being carried on, an extensive survey of the distribution of rural churches in the three provinces of Anhwei, Kiangsu and Chekiang was completed. A single sheet survey blank¹³ asking for information regarding location and number of churches, size of membership, proportion of rural and non-rural members, type of leadership, degree of self-support, was mailed to missionaries or Chinese denominational secretaries and district superintendents in all mission or denominational centers. After much correspondence and frequent follow-up letters the desired data were secured from over 95 per cent of the rural churches in these three provinces of east China. Statistical results of this regional survey are given in this volume. Fortunately the work was completed just before the beginning of hostilities in east China. The study becomes more significant in view of the terrific losses of property and life and the serious disruption of normal church activities which this area has suffered. We now have a statistical record of the number and status of all rural churches in one region just before the fateful storm of 1937 broke. Some day the recovery achieved after disaster may be measured in terms of

¹³ For copy of the Survey form used, see Appendix.

comparison with the data of this survey. Large maps showing the location of rural churches in these three provinces have been prepared but, on account of their detail, are not reproduced in this volume.

The tabulation of the material in the survey schedules and the preparation of this volume summarizing in part the results of the case studies was done in the spring of 1938, and was presented as a dissertation in candidacy for the degree of doctor of philosophy at Yale University. In both the extensive survey and in the studies of sample churches, the aim was to discover significant comparisons and relationships as well as to secure important data. It was not possible to present all the results of the survey in this volume, which deals primarily with the social and educational aspects of rural community life and with the teaching aspects of the church's program. Other data will be summarized in a second volume.

Plan of this Volume

Survey I contains the results of the Extensive Survey on distribution of rural churches in Chekiang, Kiangsu and Anhwei provinces.

Survey II contains the results in part of the case studies of 73 rural churches and communities. Part I of these case studies relates to the community or environment of the church. Part II relates to the work of rural reconstruction or betterment being carried on in the particular community by government or non-church social agencies. Part III is the survey of the church itself.

Some portions of the data secured in Part I are presented in this volume, brief references are made to the data of Part II, while about two-thirds of the data secured in Part III are utilized. The report of the case studies follows in general the outline of questions in the Survey Schedule.

Acknowledgements

Several persons who have given encouragement and assistance have already been mentioned. Mr. John H. Reisner, Executive Secretary, Agricultural Missions, Inc., has been unfailingly helpful with suggestions. I wish to thank President Handel Lee and my colleagues at Nanking Theological Seminary for their interest and cooperation, and for releasing me from class work for several weeks in order that I might give full-time to the survey. The study in its

wider scope would not have been possible without the generous assistance of Mr. J. Merle Davis of the International Missionary Council research staff. Too high praise cannot be given to my Chinese associates in the Rural Church Department, and to many of our students now in rural service or in preparation for the rural ministry, who have participated enthusiastically and effectively in this effort from the beginning. We have been learning our rural task together, and the comradeship with these men in study, work and service has been to me a joy beyond words to express. Essential also to the success of the survey was the splendid cooperation given by missionaries and Chinese Christian workers all over China. While many of them were kind enough to say that the study was of value in providing them with a better understanding of their own field and work, the service which they rendered will have also an influence far beyond the bounds of their own mission and church group, as the results of this cooperative research will show. Mrs. Piyun Gan Wei, a graduate of Ginling College and for two years director of women's work in the Lichwan Christian Rural Reconstruction Center, was secretary for nearly a year in the Survey office. She attended to much of the English and Chinese correspondence and directed the completion of some surveys after I left China, with great efficiency. My wife assisted me in preparation of typewritten manuscript of the survey schedule and in many other ways. Professor Hugh Hartshorne kindly let me use some of the facilities of his research office. Finally, I wish to express my indebtedness to Dean Luther A. Weigle and Professor Kenneth S. Latourette for constant counsel and inspiration not only in these studies but also in the larger task related to the research, the training of Christian ministers for service in the churches of rural China.

New Haven, Connecticut.

May 1, 1938

SURVEY I

EXTENSIVE SURVEY OF EAST CHINA CHURCHES

SURVEY I

DISTRIBUTION OF RURAL CHURCHES IN ANHWEI, KIANGSU AND CHEKIANG

Purpose. The three provinces of East China—Anhwei, Kiangsu and Chekiang—were selected for a sample regional survey of an extensive type. The purpose was to locate all rural churches in these provinces and to find how they are distributed in *hsien* cities, market-towns, villages and the open country. Data were also sought on type of church organization, type of leadership, size of membership, proportion of men and of women, proportion of rural and non-rural members, and self-support status in each of these churches or congregations. It was hoped also that comparisons might be made between the results of this study and statistics in the 1922 Survey Volume, "The Christian Occupation of China," showing to what extent the rural churches have grown in the past fifteen years.

Procedure. A single sheet survey blank was used.¹ These blanks were sent to all mission stations and central offices of denominational groups or church bodies, in the three provinces, with a request for full information. The response was very gratifying. Almost complete statistics were secured from 23 mission or church groups. The Assemblies of God, one Faith Mission in Anhwei, and a few scattered indigenous sects who will not report membership, failed to respond. Some church groups sent totals but not detailed classifications.

Explanation of Terms

1. A rural church was defined as a church in open country, village, market-town, or small city, working chiefly among rural people.

2. Three types of churches were distinguished: (*a*) the organized congregation with a church building, (*b*) the branch church, evangelistic center, with some resident Christians and

¹ See Appendix.

regular meetings in a definite place, (c) a preaching point, with occasional preaching in a definite place, and with resident Christians or inquirers.

3. Three types of leaders were distinguished: (a) resident pastor or preacher, (b) circuit or itinerant preacher in charge of the local point, and (c) resident lay-leader.

4. The active membership includes adult baptized members, both men and women.

5. A rural member is a member whose family is engaged in farming or other definitely rural occupation. A non-rural member is one whose family is engaged in commercial or other non-agricultural occupation.

6. Three grades of self-support were recognized: entire, partial and none. But as interpretations of what self-support involves vary in different church groups, the answers to this question can give only a general idea of the situation.

In the tables, classification according to mission groups rather than Chinese church bodies is used, in order to facilitate comparisons with the 1922 Survey statistics.

Interpretations and Conclusions

1. The total number of rural churches, branch churches, evangelistic centers and places of worship and occasional preaching centers, in the three provinces, is 1,824. The number of organized congregations and evangelistic centers reported in the 1922 Survey was 2,857.² No distinction was made between city and rural churches but if two-thirds are taken to be rural churches, then the number of rural churches and chapels in 1922 and 1937 is about the same. Most of the original survey sheets and records upon which the 1922 Survey was based have unfortunately been destroyed, hence it is not possible to compare the location of rural churches in 1922 and 1937. Maps of the distribution of churches in these three provinces, published in the 1922 Survey, give some idea to what extent the Christian movement had then penetrated rural communities. Allowing for missing data in the recent survey, the total number of rural churches now is only slightly larger than in 1922. This is probably due to the fact that, while some new churches and preaching centers have been opened, others have been closed.

² *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. 293.

TABLE I—LOCATION OF RURAL CHURCHES IN ANHWEI, KIANGSU AND CHEKIANG

DISTRIBUTION OF RURAL CHURCHES

Mission	Province	Location of Churches				Total
		Hsien city	Small city	Market Town	Village	Open Country
American Advent	Ku. An.		5		3	1
American Baptist (North)	Che.	5	1	23	24	4
American Church Mission (Episcopal)	Ku. An.	8		27	3	2
American Friends	Ku.		1	10	2	2
Christian and Missionary Alliance	Che. An.	11	9	6	32	
China Inland Mission	Ku. Che. An.	43	10	102	177	28
Christians' Mission	Che.	1		3	15	1
Church Missionary Society (Anglican)	Che.	10	1	25	78	5
Christian Reformed Church	Ku.	2	9	9	5	
Independent (New Zealand)	Ku.		1		1	1
Independent (German)	Ku.	1		1	5	
Independent (Sweet)	Che.	3		2	8	
London Missionary Society	Ku.	3	1	4	3	
Methodist Episcopal	Ku. An.	2		16	1	
Methodist Episcopal (South)	Ku. Che.	9		52	32	4
Methodist Missionary Society (English)	Che.	10	1	11	154	86
Pacific Coast Missionary Society	Che.		2	7	8	1
Presbyterian (North)	Ku. Che. An.	19	14	89	46	7
Presbyterian (South)	Ku. Che.	19	21	197	149	23
Southern Baptist Convention	Ku. An.	3		11	8	1
Seventh-Day Adventist	Che.	21	2	27	17	3
Seventh-Day Baptist	Ku.				1	1
United Christian Mission Soc. (Disci.)	An. Ku.	2	1	7	3	
Totals		172	79	629	775	169
Per cent of all churches		9.4	4.4	34.4	42.5	9.3
						100

TABLE II—TYPES OF CHURCH ORGANIZATION AND OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN RURAL CHURCHES OF ANHWEI, KIANGSU AND CHEKIANG

Mission	Type of Church			Type of Leadership		
	Organized Congregation	Evangelistic Center	Occasional Preaching	Resident Preacher	Itinerant Preacher	Resident Lay- Leader
American Advent	6	2	1	7		2
American Baptist (North)	29	23	5	24	25	8
American Church Mission (Episcopal)	27	9	4	27	10	2
American Friends	10	3	2	10	4	1
Christian & Missionary Alliance	24	18	16	25	16	6
China Inland Mission	237	83	15	64	87	103
Christians' Mission	9	1	11	14		6
Church Missionary Society (Anglican)	71	15	20	33	61	6
Christian Reformed Church		20	5	11	13	1
Independent (New Zealand)			3	1	2	
Independent (German)	4	1	2	1	3	3
Independent (Sweet Mission)	1	12			13	
London Missionary Society	10	1		9	1	1
Methodist Episcopal	15		4	10	5	3
Methodist Episcopal (South)	58	20	17	41	37	16
Methodist Missionary Society (English)	78	166	15	29	71	162
Pacific Coast Missionary Society	13	5		10	8	
Presbyterian (North)	68	92	15	55	88	26
Presbyterian (South)	142	168	45	138	241	22
Southern Baptist Convention	11	3	4	10	5	2
Seventh-Day Adventist	49	17	2	38	11	11
Seventh-Day Baptist		1			1	
United Christian Missionary Society (Disciples)	8	2	3	7	4	2
Totals	870	662	189	564	705	384
Per cent of all churches	47.6	36.0	10.4	30.9	38.6	21.1

DISTRIBUTION OF RURAL CHURCHES

TABLE III—NUMBER OF ACTIVE BAPTIZED MEMBERS, PROPORTION OF RURAL AND NON-RURAL MEMBERS AND DEGREE OF SELF-SUPPORT IN RURAL CHURCHES OF ANHWEI, KIANGSU AND CHEKIANG

Mission	Active Membership		Distribution of Members			Number of self-supporting churches	
	Men	Women	Total	Rural	Non-Rural	Entirely	Partly
American Advent	228	75	303	162	141	7	
American Baptist (North)	1,270	929	2,199	1,579	620	5	51
American Church Mission (Episcopal)	1,143*	702*	3,299	2,350*	845*	18	11*
American Friends	42*	50*	483	3*	89*	1	9
Christian & Missionary Alliance	711*	580*	1,656	1,052	604	9	23
China Inland Mission	8,601*	6,127*	14,873*	10,849*	3,650*	180	187
Christians' Mission				Mostly*			20
Church Missionary Society (Anglican)	3,486	2,885	6,371	Mostly*	82*	16	103
Christian Reformed Church	102	88	190	100*		1	10
Independent (New Zealand)	4	1	5	3	2		3
Independent (German)	57	141	198	Mostly*		7	
Independent (Sweet Mission)	146	125	271	142	129		13
London Missionary Society	422	584	1,006	886	120	1	10
Methodist Episcopal	256	199	455	236	219		19
Methodist Episcopal (South)	2,803*	2,622*	5,425	3,410*	1,792*	3	66
Methodist Missionary Society (English)			5,218	4,269	949		262
Pacific Coast Missionary Society	456	465	921	885	36	4	11
Presbyterian (North)	3,648	3,833	7,481	5,263	1,709	51	86
Presbyterian (South)	3,648*	3,892	10,931	2,275*	1,476*	73	251
Southern Baptist Convention	301*	254*	775	513	262	3	11
Seventh-Day Adventist	522*	291*	2,036*	609*	204*	8	21*
Seventh-Day Baptist	*	*			*		1
United Christian Miss'y Society (Disc.)	447	274	721	332	389	4	8
Totals	28,293*	24,087*	64,817*	34,918*	13,318*	369	1,133
Per cent of churches reporting	54.0	46.0	100.	72.4	27.6	21.1	66.8
Per cent of all churches	43.7	37.3		52.4	20.6	19.7	63.1

2. By far the largest number of rural churches in this survey, 76 per cent, are located in market-towns and villages. About one-tenth are in *hsien* cities and one-tenth in the open country. The open country may often mean a hamlet or cluster of farm houses. In the case studies which follow 76.3 per cent of the sample churches studied are in market-towns and villages, 16.4 per cent in *hsien* cities and small cities and 6.9 per cent in the open country; the proportions are almost the same in both surveys. In general we may say that of the truly rural churches in China about three-fourths are located in market-towns and villages, and about one-fourth in smaller cities and the open country. There are variations, however, between denominations. The Presbyterian Mission (South) and the English Methodist Mission have less than 5 per cent of their rural churches located in cities of any size.

3. The proportion of organized congregations in this survey is 47.6 per cent. In the 1922 Survey the proportion of organized churches in cities and villages was 45.4 per cent.³ Since a larger percentage of churches in the cities have become organized congregations than in the country, the comparative figures mean that there has been an increase in organized churches in rural areas since 1922, perhaps of 20 per cent. The ratio of organized to unorganized congregations is much higher in certain church groups; e.g., the Church Missionary Society, Methodist Episcopal, and China Inland Mission. In the Presbyterian groups there is a larger proportion of unorganized branch churches or chapels.

4. The population of these three provinces is at least 75,000,000. A rough estimate puts the number of natural rural communities or market areas at about 3,000. From a study of the lists of churches sent in and of the maps made from them it is clear that not more than one-third of these rural communities have in them a church, organized Christian group or regular place of Christian worship and preaching. In Kiang-ning *hsien*, the county nearest to Nanking, there are 35 market-towns and market communities, with a total population of over 450,000. Yet only ten of the markets have Protestant churches, branch churches or places of worship. In Lishui *hsien*, just south, there is but one church in the whole *hsien* of 190,000. The Wenchow area where the English Methodist Missionary Society works, is probably the best occupied by rural churches of any

³ *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. 293.

area in the three provinces. But most of the churches are small groups averaging about twenty members, located in villages. In three important provinces where one-fifth of the missionaries in China reside and where are located some of the most important Christian institutions and organizations, the Christian movement has not yet touched effectively two-thirds of the rural communities. And in many communities where there are Christians the church is still weak and struggling. The need for church extension in rural areas is as great as ever.

5. About one-third of the churches have resident pastors or preachers, over one-third are supervised by circuit or itinerant preachers or evangelists, and nearly one-fourth have lay-leaders. The maps show that many of these branches and evangelistic centers are within a "larger parish" or a circuit not farther than fifteen or twenty miles from where the pastor or preacher lives. In the case studies three-fourths of the rural churches have resident pastors or preachers, showing that they are largely the central churches from which branches are supervised and the work of districts and circuits is carried on. The proportion of churches which have a responsible layman in charge is surprisingly large and indicates a definite move in the direction of more lay leadership.

6. The rural churches of these provinces report a total membership of 64,787. In 1922 all churches, both urban and rural, had 62,874 members.⁴ Supposing that two-thirds or 40,000 of these live in rural communities, then the growth of membership in the rural churches of east China has been about 55 per cent in the last fifteen years, while the total growth of all Protestant groups in China has been between 45 and 50 per cent.

7. The 1922 Survey estimated that 88 per cent of the population in Anhwei, Kiangsu and Chekiang lived in towns of 10,000 or less and in rural communities.⁵ The percentage may be a little lower now with the growth of Shanghai, Nanking and other large cities. But it is probably still well over 80 per cent. How do the number of urban and rural Christians compare? In this survey statistics of city churches were not sought. But a comparison may be made between the statistics of this survey and the reports of some mission and church groups which include all communicant mem-

⁴ *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. 293.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

bers.⁶ Such a comparison shows the following proportion of rural members in the total communicant membership of six selected church groups:

China Inland Mission	87 per cent
Presbyterian (South)	71 per cent
Church Missionary Society	69 per cent
Presbyterian (North)	63 per cent
Methodist Episcopal	42 per cent
United Christian Missionary Society	34 per cent

The average percentage of rural members in these six groups is 61 per cent.

8. Men are in the majority among the church members, 54 per cent being men and 46 per cent women. This compares with a proportion of 64 men members to 36 women members in both city and rural churches, in the 1922 Survey. In the case studies of churches in all parts of China the ratio between men and women members is 60 to 40. All recent data indicate that the proportion of women in the rural churches has been steadily increasing.

9. Two-thirds of the rural churches in the three provinces have classified their members as rural or non-rural. Of 48,236 Christians 72 per cent are described as rural, that is dependent upon farming or allied occupation, and 28 per cent as non-rural. The latter group includes merchants, artisans, non-farming laborers, teachers and pupils and others. These statistics show clearly that more than two-thirds of the members of churches in rural communities are dependent upon the soil for their living.

10. The majority of these rural churches, 67 per cent, are reported as partially self-supporting. Their members contribute toward the salary of the pastor or preacher or toward local expenses. Twenty-one per cent are said to be entirely self-supporting and 12 per cent not at all self-supporting. Self-support may mean entire support of a resident pastor or only responsibility for a church building and current expenses. Therefore these percentages cannot give anything but a general picture. We may safely say, however, that the share of the rural Christians in the support of their own churches has been steadily increasing.

⁶ Statistics of present church membership taken from *The 1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China* and recent mission reports.

SURVEY II

INTENSIVE SURVEY OF 73 RURAL CHURCHES

SURVEY II

CASE STUDIES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND PROGRAM OF 73 RURAL CHURCHES

Method of Survey. The general procedure followed in making these case studies has been outlined in the Introduction. The instrument for use in survey of sample churches and communities was a schedule form entitled "Rural Church Survey," which was prepared between 1933 and 1935 and which was tested in several places before publication in 1936. Copies of the survey form (in English and Chinese) as published and used may be secured from Nanking Theological Seminary.

An effort was made to secure at least one hundred case studies, representing if possible every province and important Protestant denomination or church group carrying on rural work. Actually 122 churches were being surveyed. But the Sino-Japanese war prevented the completion or mailing of a considerable number of these surveys. A total of 73 were carried through and these have been used as the basis for the summaries and findings in the following pages.

Outline of the Survey. Part I of the Schedule is entitled "The Community." The aim of the questions in this part was to discover facts and conditions in community life affecting or being affected by the work of Christian rural churches. Several exhaustive surveys of agricultural, economic and social conditions in rural China have been made or are being made. There was no attempt to duplicate these. The Rural Church Survey aimed rather to secure a few facts essential to an understanding of the rural community as a whole. The questions are such as any rural Christian leader should know and be able to answer about the environment of his church and are, in a sense, a test of his understanding of the social setting of the church. Especial emphasis was laid upon the problems of rural leadership, moral conditions and the religious beliefs and practices of rural people which have been neglected in many other studies of rural life in China. Due to the limits of this volume, all the data

secured in Part I are not reported. But there will be a brief discussion of each of the fourteen environmental factors affecting the church, showing the significance of each and introducing sample data secured in this survey and some material from other surveys which will serve as a check upon the results of the sample studies. The data in hand show not only definite rural social trends throughout China which influence Christian work but also some striking differences between communities in various sections of the country.

Part II of the Case Studies is entitled "Rural Reconstruction in the Community." The aim of the questions in this part was to discover what programs of rural reconstruction or rural betterment are being conducted by government or non-Christian educational and social agencies in the communities studied. The church should be vitally interested in all such efforts and there are many ways in which church leaders and local congregations may cooperate. In some cases the church has been a pioneer in social reforms or service programs which other agencies with larger financial resources have taken over. In other cases the church has been a link between outside organizations and institutions which can serve rural life and the local community. The aim was also to discover whether the community needs revealed in Part I of the Survey are being met by government or private agencies. A survey of the community and its problems and of what is already being done in rural reconstruction should help the church to evaluate its own aims and program and to make plans for the future. The data secured under Part II are largely omitted from this volume but a brief discussion of the rural reconstruction movement in China and its significance for the rural church is introduced.

Part III is entitled "The Church," and the data secured in this part of the 73 case studies form the body of the present report. The following sections have been selected for inclusion in this volume;

1. History
2. Membership and Constituency
4. Leadership, organization and church polity
5. Finance and methods of achieving self-support
6. Church Life and Work (Program of the Church)
 - (2) Religious Education
 - (6) Sundays and other special days
 - (7) Community Service (part).

Data on General Education, Worship, Preaching and Evangelism, Fellowship and Mutual Aid, Training of Lay-workers, Extension of Church to New Centers, and Cooperation with Other Groups and Agencies, will be published later. The second volume will also include complete descriptions of a selected number of churches and, if possible, a comparative study showing the effect upon the churches of the war and other political and social changes since 1937.

Reliability of the Data. The representative character of the communities and churches studied is shown by the list which follows. The churches are located in 13 different provinces, north, east, south and west. All types of communities are included: those centering in market-towns and *hsien* (county) seats, pure agricultural village communities, open country communities and rural communities near large cities. The churches represent 25 missionary societies which are doing Christian work among the villages, out of 87 missionary societies listed in the 1936 *Handbook of the Christian Movement in China*.¹ But these societies or the Chinese church bodies with which they are associated, include more than 80 per cent of the total Protestant communicant membership in China. Fifteen large Chinese church bodies are represented; the Church of Christ in China, for example, which now unites the work being done by sixteen mission societies—Presbyterian, Congregational and English Baptist—and which reports 24 per cent of all Protestant communicants in China. The *Handbook of the Christian Movement* lists twelve Chinese church groups which have 86 per cent of the total church membership.² Nine of these groups are represented in the sample studies of rural churches. A comparative table showing percentage of communicants and percentage of case studies in each church group follows:

The remaining 10.9 per cent of the case studies represent six important smaller church bodies—the Presbyterian Church in China (not united with the Church of Christ in China), Church of the Brethren, Evangelical Church Mission, United Christian Missionary Society (Disciples), National Holiness Mission (an interdenominational evangelistic organization) and Swedish Baptist Mission.

¹ *The 1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China under Protestant Auspices.* (Shanghai.)

² *Ibid.*, p. vi.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

	<i>Per cent of all communicants in this group</i>	<i>Per cent of case studies in this group</i>
1. Church of Christ in China	24.2	39.7
2. China Inland Mission	16.8	2.7
3. Methodist Episcopal Church	8.0	13.7
4. Southern Baptist Churches	8.1	...
5. Chung Hwa Sheng Kung Hui (Episcopal and Anglican)	6.8	5.5
6. Lutheran Church of China	4.3	5.5
7. Methodist Church (English Methodist)	4.2	8.2
8. Seventh-Day Adventist	2.9	...
9. North China Kung Li Hui (Congregational)	2.8	5.6
10. Methodist Episcopal Church, South	2.6	2.7
11. Northern Baptist	2.5	5.5
12. Basel Mission	1.5	...
Total	84.7	89.1

It was comparatively easy to secure sufficient case studies from the Church of Christ of China and the Methodist Episcopal churches. The number from the China Inland Mission is disappointingly small. It was found difficult to secure sufficient interest and cooperation within that church body for such a study. And, although the China Inland Mission has stressed evangelization in rural areas many of the churches which they have established are still in a rather simple stage of organization and program. A serious effort was made to include some Southern Baptist Mission churches; some surveys were started in their areas of work but were not completed. Seventh-Day Adventist leaders furnished data for the Church Distribution Survey but did not desire to cooperate in the intensive study. The survey from the Basel (German) Mission has not yet been received.

The large proportion of case studies in Fukien, Kwangtung and Shantung provinces is due to the great number of churches and communicants in those provinces. According to the 1922 Survey³ 41 per cent of the church membership of all China was in Fukien, Kwangtung and Shantung; 40.8 per cent of the churches studied are in these provinces. The percentage of studies in other provinces follows very closely the percentage of Christians in each province

³ *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. 293.

as listed in the 1922 Survey volume. The five inner provinces from which no completed surveys have yet been received include 8.5 per cent of the total membership as surveyed in 1922. Manchuria where live nearly 5 per cent of the people of China, could not be represented in the study for obvious reasons. The outlying provinces, where some surveys were begun in the summer of 1937 but not completed, include less than one per cent of China's total population.

The sample studies are, therefore, representative of the most important areas of population and mission work in China.

The case studies also represent various types of churches; those with resident pastors and those under lay leaders; self-supporting churches and churches still receiving mission grants; churches with large and small parish areas and large and small memberships; churches with a history of fifty years and churches which have been founded within the past decade.

Are the data secured in the surveys reliable? Who were the surveyors? Twelve studies were made by members of the staff and students or graduates of the Rural Church Department of Nanking Theological Seminary. One was made by teachers and students of Cheeloo University School of Theology. Fifty-five were directed or carried out by missionaries in cooperation with Chinese district superintendents or other regional workers. In many cases the data were secured by Chinese workers and carefully checked by the missionary surveyor before mailing. Five surveys were directed by Chinese superintendents or teachers alone. A total of 358 persons were listed by the surveyors as informants, assisting in the gathering of data, an average of 4.6 to each survey. The most important of these informants was naturally the local pastor or other responsible church leader. But the responsible surveyor in every case was some one other than the local leader; the survey was not merely a questionnaire to be filled out by local church workers. The fact that outside workers made or directed the survey gives the studies more objective value and insures something of a critical attitude in the answers. There are many evidences that the surveyors tried to be critical yet fair.

The results of the local church surveys show variations in the number of questions actually answered and also in the quality of the data secured. Sometimes the desired information was not avail-

able. In other cases guesses as to statistics were made. But there are several checks on statistics in different parts of the Survey Schedule and where answers did not appear to be fairly reliable they were thrown out. Many communities cannot furnish exact data on population or social conditions and not a large number of churches have been in the habit of keeping detailed records of their membership and work. Certain estimated figures have been included in the data when exact figures were not available. On the whole about 80 per cent of the information secured through the questions in the Survey could be utilized. The reports of the surveyors show that they usually spent at least ten days on the study of one church and community selected and a longer time in writing up the report of the study. In many cases the survey extended over several weeks.

Many efforts were made to insure a fairly common standard in answering most of the questions. A detailed sheet, "Instructions to Surveyors," was prepared. Different interpretations of terms and personal judgments and impressions naturally affect some of the answers, but this is unavoidable.

In field trips last year I visited areas or consulted with surveyors in connection with 49 of the 73 completed surveys. With all of the surveyors there have been either conversations or frequent correspondence. I do not think that more reliable information could have been secured by any other similar group in China.

Do the studies represent a cross section of strong and weak churches? The churches were selected in consultation with missionary friends, denominational leaders and Chinese coworkers. The aim was to choose representative churches, not best churches. Many surveyors said that there are no best churches in their fields of work; each church has strong and weak points. This statement is borne out by results of the survey. Some supposedly strong churches are weak and undeveloped in certain phases of their program. Many surveyors were surprised at weaknesses in churches which the study revealed. The results of the survey are, on the whole, encouraging. Yet stories of weak, struggling and even dying churches are not absent. Four churches where theological or other training institutions are carrying on experimental programs are included. The large majority of the case studies are typical rural churches. They reflect the social environment in which they have

been planted and the various policies and methods of the mission or denominational groups which are responsible for their nurture. They also represent both the narrower view of evangelism which is limited largely to preaching and Bible teaching and the view of the church as a Christian fellowship which should be serving and influencing the community about it.

Of the 73 survey schedules summarized in this volume, 23 were on English forms and 50 on Chinese forms. The data from the Chinese forms have been translated into English for the purpose of this report.

LIST OF RURAL CHURCHES SURVEYED

<i>No. Location, Province</i>	<i>Mission</i>	<i>Chinese Church Body</i>		<i>Surveyors</i>
1 Bientang, Kiangsu	PS	CCC		Rev. Frank Brown Suchowfu, Ku.
2 Changhwa, Kiangsu	PS	CCC		Rev. L. I. Moffett Mr. Wu Jui Kiangyin, Ku.
3 Changping, Hopei	MEFB	MECC		Rev. Tien Li-kung Peiping.
4 Changteng, Hopei	ABCFM	KLH		Rev. E. W. Galt Mrs. A. B. Frame Paoting, Hop.
5 Changtsun, Honan	LUM	LCC		Rev. Olaf Olafsson Tenghsien, Hon.
6 Chiang Chen, Chekiang	ABFMS	CLH		Rev. A. F. Ufford Rev. T. C. Bau Shaohsing and Hang- chow, Che.
7 Chumei, Hunan	NMS	LCC		Rev. A. H. Eggen Sinhua, Hun.
8 Hantung, Honan	LUM	LCC		Rev. Daniel Nelson Rev. Kuh I-hsuan Chenyang, Hon.
9 Hsien Tsun, Kwangtung	CMS	SKH		Rev. H. Wittenbach Canton

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

<i>No. Location, Province</i>	<i>Mission</i>	<i>Chinese Church Body</i>	<i>Surveyors</i>
10 Hsuchang, Honan	Aug.	LCC	Rev. V. E. Swenson Rev. Chang Hsiang-chiu Hsuehchang, Hon.
11 Hungshan Chiao, Fukien	ABCFM	CCC	Prof. G. M. Newell and students Foochow, Fuk.
12 Kan Tsun, Chekiang	PS	CCC	Rev. C. W. Worth Hangchow, Che.
13 Kiang Hsia, Kwangtung	ABFMS	CLH	Rev. E. H. Giedt Kityang, Tung.
14 Kwalih, Chekiang	ABFMS	CLH	Rev. A. F. Ufford Shaohsing, Che.
15 Lishui, Kiangsu	PN	CCC	Rev. Hsu Hwa-chiang Nanking Theological Seminary
16 Liulin, Shansi	ABCFM	KLH	Rev. H. S. Matthews Fenyang, Sha.
17 Liutsai, Fukien	MEFB	MECC	Rev. Chen Tien-chia Foochow
18 Lungtien, Fukien	MEFB	MECC	Rev. Sie Tung-lou Nanking Theological Seminary
19 Mintsing, Fukien	MEFB	MECC	Dr. Roxy Lefforge Foochow
20 Nambo, Hainan, Kwangtung	PN	CCC	Rev. P. C. Melrose Nodoa, Hainan, Tung.
21 Nanpi, Hopei	MEFB	MECC	Mr. Liu I-hsing and Mr. Chang Yin-chieh Peiping
22 Pohsing, Shantung	BMS	CCC	Rev. H. Payne and Mr. Chang Sze-chung Tsinan, Sung.
23 Polihsiang, Kiangsu (Poliang)	MES	KLW	Rev. J. H. H. Berckman Mr. Li Liangpeng Sungkiang, Ku.
24 Samhai, Kwangtung	EPM	CCC	Rev. E. P. Mobbs Wukingfu, Tung.
25 Shangtengt, Kiangsi	MEFB	MECC	Mr. Hsu Pao-ching Nanking Theological Seminary

CASE STUDIES OF THE ENVIRONMENT

<i>No. Location, Province</i>	<i>Mission</i>	<i>Chinese Church Body</i>	<i>Surveyors</i>
26 Shihchiatai, Hopei	LMS	CCC	Rev. A. M. Baxter Siaochang, Hop.
27 Shihmachang, Szechwan	UCC	CCC	Rev. A. C. Hoffman Luchow, Sze.
28 Shoukwang, Shantung	PN	PCC	Rev. D. K. West and Rev. Wu Keh-chin Weihsien, Sung.
29 Shuiyu, Shansi	CBM	YAH	Rev. F. H. Crumpacker Pingting, Shansi
30 Shunhwachen, Kiangsu	PN	CCC	Rural Church Dept. Nanking Theological Seminary
31 Sipu, Szechwan	UCC	CCC	Rev. H. G. Brown and Mrs. Chu Chun-tai Chengtu, Sze.
32 Taolin, Hunan	RCUS	CCC	Mr. Shu Shih-tsai Nanking Theological Seminary
33 Tapeiyin, Hopei	MEFB	MECC	Miss Ortha M. Lane Mr. Ma Cheng-ou Tientsin, Hop.
34 Tayeh, Hupeh	MMS	MCC	Rev. W. R. Simpson Tayeh, Hup.
35 Tsouping, Shantung	BMS	CCC	Cheeloo Theological Seminary Tsinan, Sung
36 Tungchuang, Hopei	ABCFM	KLH	Rev. James A. Hunter Tunghsien, Hop.
37 Tutze, Chekiang	MMS	MCC	Rev. H. Tomlinson and Mr. Eo Ting-sheng Ningpo, Che.
38 Wutungwei, Fukien	ABCFM	CCC	Rev. E. H. Smith Ingtau, Fuk.
39 Chalin, Hunan	EC	TTH	Rev. V. L. Varnham Liling, Hun.
40 Changchiu, Shantung	BMS	CCC	Dr. A. L. Carson Mr. Shih Chin-ling Mr. Feng Peh-fang Tsinan, Sung.
41 Chienning, Fukien	ABCFM	CCC	Mr. Liao Ho Shaowu, Fuk.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

<i>No. Location, Province</i>	<i>Mission</i>	<i>Chinese Church Body</i>	<i>Surveyors</i>
42 Chihkehchuang, Shantung	PN	CCC	Rev. J. E. Kidder Mr. Han Keh-li Cheefoo, Shantung
43 Chiho, Shantung	PN	CCC	Dr. A. L. Carson Mr. Tu Chung-san Tsinan, Sung.
44 Chinping, Shantung	ABCFM	KLH	Rev. L. Gilbert Mr. Hsu Chai-chen Tehchow, Sung.
45 Chiufengyuan, Hunan	MMS	MCC	Rev. D. W. Thompson Pingkiang, Hunan
46 Chuye, Shantung (Suchiachi)	PN	PCC	Rev. D. C. Walter Tsining, Sung.
47 Houtsun, Hopei	NHM	TSH	Rev. Earl Newton Tientsin
48 Hsianning, Hupeh	LM	CCC	Rev. E. S. Box Wuchang, Hupeh
49 Hwangtupu, Hunan	RCUS	CCC	Rev. G. R. Snyder Yuanling, Hun.
50 Kaomi, Shantung (Chungchia Wangyin)	SBM	CHH	Rev. Sten Lindberg Mr. Chung Hsin-wu Kaomi, Sung.
51 Kehtangchi, Kiangsu	UCMS	CTH	Mr. Hung Hwei-yu Nanking Theological Seminary
52 Kengchiatsun, Anhwei	PN	CCC	Mr. Timothy Yang Nanking Theological Seminary
53 Kuhsien, Fukien (Diongloh)	ABCFM	CCC	Rev. A. O. Rindon Diongloh, Fuk.
54 Kunglung, Hupeh	MEFB	MECC	Rev. C. F. Johannaber and Rev. Chou Changan Kiukiang, Ki.
55 Kutien, Fukien	MEFB	MECC	Rev. C. E. Winter Mr. Cheng Yuan-hsun Kutien, Fuk.
56 Lingling, Hunan	MMS	MCC	Rev. A. G. Leigh Lingling, Hun.
57 Lipu, Kwangtung	PN	CCC	Rev. A. H. Van Etten Linchow, Tung.

CASE STUDIES OF THE ENVIRONMENT

<i>No. Location, Province</i>	<i>Mission</i>	<i>Chinese Church Body</i>	<i>Surveyors</i>
58 Liu Shih, Chekiang	MMS	MCC	Rev. Chu Chin-ih Nanking Theological Seminary
59 Lungtangtien, Kwangtung	PN	CCC	Rev. Arthur E. French Kachek, Hainan
60 Mienchu, Szechwan	CMS	SKH	Rev. H. A. Maxwell Mienchu, Sze.
61 Nansheng, Fukien	RCA	CCC	Rev. W. R. Angus Siokho, Fu.
62 Paisha (Bahsua), Fukien	WFMS	MECC	Dr. Roxy Lefforge Foochow, Fuk.
63 Pehchiashan, Hunan	CIM	CIM	Rev. Li Yuan-wei Changsha, Hun.
64 Shekki, Kwangtung (Lampin)	UCC	CCC	Rev. D. McRae and Mr. Tsai Chien-hsing Shekki, Tung.
65 Shiherhpa, Chekiang	CIM	CIM Ind.	Rev. C. Fairclough Mr. Luh Kao-sheng Hangchow, Che.
66 Shiuhsi, Hainan, Kwangtung	PN	CCC	Mr. Wang Chi-teh Nanking Theological Seminary
67 Taitsang, Kiangsu (Shwangfeng)	MES	KLW	Rev. Peng Shen-wen Taitsang, Ku.
68 Tienchuan, Szechwan (Shihyangchen)	ABFMS	CCC	Rev. F. W. Smith Mr. Wu Kai-yun Yochow, Sze.
69 Tsekuo, Chekiang	CMS	KLH	Rev. W. R. O. Taylor Hangchow, Che.
70 Tsungyang, Anhwei	ACM	SKH	Mr. Hung Hwei-yu Nanking Theological Seminary
71 Tuling, Fukien	LMS	CCC	Rev. A. F. Griffiths Hweian, Fuk.
72 Tunglaokuan, Shantung	PN	CCC	Rev. R. A. Torrey Rev. Chen Chin-fang Tsinan, Sung.
73 Yenling, Kwangtung (Inling)	MMS	MCC	Rev. W. H. Alton Shiuchow, Tung.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

Classification by Provinces

Fukien (Fuk.)	11	Hunan (Hun.)	7
Kuangtung (Tung.)	9	Szechwan (Sze.)	4
Shantung (Sung.)	10	Honan (Ho.)	3
Kiangsu (Ku.)	7	Hupeh (Hup.)	3
Hopei (Hop.)	7	Shansi (Sha.)	2
Chekiang (Che.)	7	Anhwei (An.)	2
		Kiangsi (Ki.)	1
Total—13 provinces.			73

Classification by Missionary Societies Founding or Supporting the Churches

Presbyterian (North)	PN	12
Methodist Episcopal Board of Foreign Missions (including one church of Women's Foreign Missionary Society)	MEFB WFMS	10
American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregational)	ABCFM	8
Methodist Missionary Society (English)	MMS	6
American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society	ABFMS	4
Presbyterian (South)	PS	3
Church Missionary Society (English)	CMS	3
Baptist Missionary Society (English)	BMS	3
London Missionary Society (Congregational)	LMS	3
United Church of Canada	UCC	3
Methodist Episcopal (South)	MES	2
Reformed Church in U. S.	RCUS	2
China Inland Mission	CIM	2
Norwegian Lutheran China Mission	NLK	1
Norwegian Missionary Society	NMS	1
Lutheran United Mission	LUM	1
Augustana Synod Mission (Lutheran)	Aug.	1
English Presbyterian Mission	EPM	1
Church of Brethren Mission	CBM	1
Evangelical Church Mission	EC	1
National Holiness Mission	NHM	1
Swedish Baptist Mission	SBM	1
United Christian Missionary Society (Disciples)	UCMS	1
Reformed Church in America	RCA	1
American Church Mission (Episcopal)	ACM	1
Total—25 missionary societies.		73

CASE STUDIES OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Classification by Chinese Church Bodies with which the Churches are Connected

Church of Christ in China	CCC	29
Methodist Episcopal Church in China	MECC	10
Methodist Church in China (English)	MCC	6
Kung Li Hui (Congregational)	KLH	4
Lutheran Church in China (Hsin I Hui)	LCC	4
Chin Li Hui (Baptist)	CLH	4
Sheng Kung Hui (Episcopal and Anglican)	SKH	4
Presbyterian Church in China	PC	3
Kan Li Wei (Chien Li Hui, Methodist South)	KLW	2
China Inland Mission (Nei Ti Hui)	CIM	1
Yu Ai Hui (Church of Brethren)	YAH	1
Tsun Tao Hui (Evangelical)	TTH	1
Chi Tuh Hui (Disciples)	CTH	1
Chin Hsin Hui (Swedish Baptist)	CHH	1
Tung Shen Hui (Holiness)	TSH	1
Total—15 Chinese church bodies.		72



PART I

THE RURAL COMMUNITY

(*Note.* In the summaries which follow, the outline of the Survey Schedule, and the numbers given to the questions in the Survey Schedule are followed. Numbers in parenthesis refer to corresponding numbers in the Survey Schedule. Numbers after churches; e.g., Church No. 51, refer to the List of Rural Churches Surveyed, pages 33-37.)

Types of Community. The word "community" was used in three senses in this survey and the surveyor was asked to indicate the type of community meant in his answer.

Community 1. Political division, *ch'ü*, *hsiang* or other administrative part of a *hsien* or county, in which the church is located.

Community 2. Natural rural community; market or trade area or other natural grouping of villages, in which the church is located.

Community 3. The church parish; the area in which the members of the local church reside and in which the church carries on its work.

The twenty-eight provinces of China (including the four northeastern provinces of Manchuria) are divided into about 1,940 administrative units known as *hsien* or counties. The average population of a *hsien* is something over 200,000 but there are wide variations. For example, in a densely populated region of northwestern Anhwei, Fuyang *hsien* has a population of 1,492,797, while Shihtao *hsien*, in a mountainous section, has only 41,086.¹ The *hsien* has become an increasingly important unit not only for local government and taxation but also for development of rural reconstruction programs on a broad scale. According to various systems prevailing in the provinces, the *hsien* is further divided for purposes of police protection, education and other government functions, into *ch'ü*, *pao*, *hsiang* or other smaller areas. These sub-divisions are almost always artificial and the boundaries are arbitrarily determined by

¹ *The Christian Occupation of China*, Appendix, p. i.

administrative convenience. They seldom take into account the natural groupings of villages and rural people, and so can hardly be called communities in the real sense. Some maps in the Appendix show how the lines of administrative areas and natural communities cross each other. However, the political divisions and subdivisions are necessary, and certain data on population and other social conditions can be secured most easily from the headquarters of government administrators.

The second type of community corresponds much more closely to what rural sociologists today call the "rural community." It signifies a group of agricultural villages or farmsteads with some system of interrelatedness and one or more centers of social and economic (and perhaps religious) life, such as a market-town. Dr. Leonard S. Hsu, former professor of sociology at Yenching University, says, "Since China is largely an agricultural country, her system of social economy is such that in rural regions usually a population of 25,000 to 35,000 constitutes some sort of natural economic unit. Such a unit has a rather distinct anthropological boundary, marked by avenues of communication and transportation as well as by systems of marketing. Each natural economic area has at least one marketing town or center; and this center is usually the center of economic and social activities of the surrounding villages or hamlets."² Dr. Hsu estimates the number of these natural communities at somewhere near 15,000; others have estimated between 20,000 and 30,000. Such a natural community would have on an average 50 or 60 villages and hamlets, or in provinces like Szechwan 2,000 to 4,000 scattered farmsteads. This kind of community corresponds with Dr. E. D. Sanderson's well-known definition, "A rural community consists of the people in a local area tributary to the center of their common interests."³

Dr. Sanderson devotes a whole chapter in his books, "The Rural Community," to the Chinese village community.⁴ The village, often a family-village or clan-village, is a neighborhood group; the cluster of villages, or of dispersed farmsteads as in Szechwan, becomes a true natural community with many common and group interests. The market-center and its villages are interdependent. The single

² Hsu, Leonard S., "A New Approach to China's Rural Re-construction," in *The China Critic*, VII. No. 28, July 12, 1934, 680-682.

³ Sanderson, E. Dwight, *Locating the Rural Community*.

⁴ Sanderson, E. Dwight, *The Rural Community*, ch. 4.

village is usually not large enough to satisfy all social and economic needs but a group of villages, within a radius of three to six miles, finds common interests and a common center and develops naturally some kind of community life. Professor J. B. Tayler of Yenching University describes two *hsien* in which one can find within a radius of three miles 45 and 22 villages and populations of 24,000 and 13,000. He concludes, "The most important fact that emerges from these figures is that over much of rural China there is within easy walking distance of a suitable center a population of 20,000 population with a rich social and a diversified economic life."⁵ Professor Tayler, Dr. J. Lossing Buck, Dr. Leonard Hsu and many other students of Chinese rural social organization insist that this type of community is the natural area for development of new patterns of social life and for programs of rural betterment which depend chiefly upon the organized efforts of the people themselves.

Community 3 in the Survey refers to the parish area, the area in which members of the local church reside and in which the church carries on its work of preaching, Christian nurture and service. General observation has led to the conclusion that most rural parishes in China tend to follow in their boundaries the lines of natural rural communities rather than of artificial political divisions such as the *hsien* or *ch'ü*. But we wished to know more definitely how the church is beginning to relate itself to the population, the political organization and the social groupings about it. Hence a clear distinction was drawn in the Survey Schedule between government administrative units, natural groupings of villages or farmsteads around common centers, and the area which the church considers its parish, in an effort to discover how these three types of community are related to one another. Some results of the investigation are here recorded.

I. COMMUNITY AND PARISH MAPS

The surveyors were asked to furnish maps of the province and *hsien* in which the church was located; a map of the community outlining the important political boundaries, boundaries of trade area and boundaries of the parish; a map of the parish area showing all villages and marking those where Christians live; and a map

⁵ Tayler, J. B., *Aspects of Rural Reconstruction*, Yenching University, Peiping, 1934.

of the church town or village. These have been carefully studied.

Forty-eight surveyors sent maps of the provinces and twenty of these indicated clearly the location of the church center or parish area in relation to important cities or towns and highways. Sample maps are reproduced in the Appendix.

Forty-five surveyors furnished *hsien* maps, some printed and some carefully drawn. Twenty of these indicated the location of the church studied and boundaries of the parish. Several showed the relation of the parish area to sub-divisions of the *hsien* such as the *ch'ü* or *hsiang*. Two parishes cover parts of two *hsien* and one reaches into three *hsien* and two provinces.

Twenty-six community maps were drawn. The number is smaller because there were not many printed maps for surveyors to copy but some of the community maps are exceedingly interesting showing how trade zones and parish areas compare in extent and indicating how villages are grouped about the market or the parish center. Samples of these maps are reproduced in the Appendix. In addition the map of the Shunhwachen natural community and parish is given in larger size because it is a good example of how the boundaries cross one another. (Church No. 30.)

Thirteen surveyors drew maps of the parish area alone. To these may be added church member distribution maps on page 40 of the Survey Schedule, of which 51 were sent in. Samples of these parish maps are also reproduced in the Appendix. Nineteen maps were received of towns or villages in which sample churches are located.

Twenty schedules were accompanied by photographs taken of community scenes or of the church and its work.

The maps were of considerable value to the surveyors in their study and also to those who have analyzed the Survey data, for they help to make clear the geographical and social factors in the environment of the church.

II. THE CHURCH COMMUNITY

(1) *Location of the church.* By definition of this survey, a rural church is a church in open country, village, market-town, or small city, working chiefly among rural people.

The location of the church in 72 of the 73 sample parishes studied is as follows:

THE RURAL COMMUNITY

	Number	Per cent of all sample churches
<i>Hsien</i> city	12	16.4
Large market-town (pop. over 2,500)	16	21.9
Small market-town (pop. under 2,500)	22	30.1
Market-village	1	1.4
Village	16	21.9
Open country	5	6.9

Market-towns are in the majority; if the *hsien* cities are added we find that 68.4 per cent of the sample churches are in market centers. If branch churches were included in this survey the proportion of village and open country churches would be higher. This is true in the Church Distribution Survey where not only central churches but also all chapels and occasional places of worship are reported.

(2) *Population of parish center.*¹ Sixty-four surveys reported on the population of the village, town or city where the church is located. The mean average population is 4,811. The average of eleven *hsien* cities in the case studies is 15,025 which shows that the type of *hsien* city which becomes a rural church center is usually the agricultural county seat, more like a large market-town. Seven of the eleven cities have a population of less than 10,000, and the smallest has only 2,653.

Thirty-four market-town parish centers have a mean average population of 3,456. Seventy per cent are below this average. Three have over 10,000 persons. The median average is 2,000, the population of the typical small market-town.

In the sixteen villages which are parish centers the average population is still less, 913. The variation is from 123 to 2,280.

Where the church is located in open country the population of the trade area and parish areas was estimated.

(3) *Size of market area.* Fifty-six surveyors reported on the number of villages in the market area or trade zone of the nearest large market center. The mean average is 76.9. The largest number of villages reported is 961 in a large parish in Kiangsu where a

¹ The figures for population in these case studies are sometimes exact statistics secured from local government offices or police headquarters; in other cases they are estimates of the local workers and of the surveyors. The population figures for the town and community in which the church is located may be taken as fairly accurate; the figures for *hsien* population are more apt to be general estimates although there is a fairly reliable system now in many county governments of counting families. Population statistics given by surveyors have been checked by other statistical reports when possible.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

population of 100,000 is served by three market-towns not far apart. The villages in this area are small, mostly hamlets. In north China most of the villages are larger and farther apart. The smallest number of villages reported is two, in an area of dispersed farmsteads. The market areas, in terms of number of villages and population, are distributed as follows:

<i>Number of villages in market area</i>	<i>Per cent of all sample market areas</i>
Less than 20	29%
20 - 49	27
50 - 99	25
More than 100	19
	100
 <i>Estimated population of market area</i>	
Under 20,000	49
20,000—50,000	40
Over 50,000	11
	100

The average population per village for all the communities studied is 329.

Forty-seven or 64 per cent of the surveys report more than one market-town in the market area, with a mean average of 3.4. The average for all the communities studied is 2.2. Often this means one larger and one smaller market in the same general area. Forty-three surveys report market-villages, that is villages with a few shops, in the trade area; the average number is 13.2 for the communities reporting or 7.8 for all the sample communities. One survey reported that several families in villages sell a few necessities but that there are no shops.

The average population of 56 market areas reported is 25,335. The range is from 3,600 to 120,000, but 55 per cent of the market communities have between 10,000 and 30,000 inhabitants. These sample studies confirm Dr. Leonard Hsu's estimate of approximately 15,000 natural economic units in all rural China.

The most common market or trade area seems to consist of one market center with two to four smaller markets and a varying number of villages having a few shops, tributary to the trading

center. In Szechwan and a few small regions in other provinces there are only large market-towns and farmsteads are scattered around these.

(4) *Size of the parish area.* Sixty-seven surveys report on the number of villages (including small market-towns and market villages) included in the parish area, or area in which church members live and the church carries on its work. The average number of villages per parish is 115.9. Fourteen churches with comparatively large parishes report over 100 villages in their area and one reports 2,000 villages. The remainder or 79 per cent of the churches report less than 100 villages, with an average per parish of 52.8. Between ten and fifty villages are reported by 46 per cent of the churches.

The estimated population of seventy parishes averages 28,044 per parish. We find the following variations.

<i>Estimated population of parish</i>	<i>Per cent of all sample parishes</i>
Under 20,000	51%
20,000 - 50,000	33
Over 50,000	16
	100

The average radius of a parish area, measured by the distance from the church center to the farthest village with Christians, is found to be 20.5 *li* or nearly 7 miles.² Out of 69 parishes furnishing data on this question, 23 per cent extend 30 *li* or further, 23 per cent extend between 20 and 30 *li*, 38 per cent extend 10 to 20 *li*, and 16 per cent extend less than 10 *li*. The greatest distance is 80 *li* (c. 26 miles) and the smallest distance is 3 *li* (c. 1 mile). The majority of parishes, 59 per cent, have a radius of between 10 and 30 *li*, (c. 3 to 10 miles).

Conclusions. A study of these data together with the community and parish maps leads to the following conclusions. In 26 cases (35 per cent) the natural trade communities and the parish areas roughly coincide; in 15 cases (20 per cent) the parish is smaller than the market area; in 11 cases (15 per cent) the parish area follows political boundaries, *hsien*, *ch'ü* or *pao* more closely; in 4

² One *li* is equivalent to about one-third of an English mile.

cases (5 per cent) the whole of a *hsien* is taken as a parish; in 5 cases (7 per cent) the parish slightly exceeds the market area in size; in 4 cases the parish studied is one small area in a larger parish covering perhaps one or two *hsien*; one parish of scattered farm-houses seems to have no relation to natural community or political boundaries. In the Shunhwachen community (Church No. 30) a large temple worship area comprising 48 *she* or village worship societies coincides in extent with the natural community; this phenomenon may be found in other communities also. Seven parishes did not furnish sufficient data to describe them. The tendency of most of these sample parishes has been to follow the lines of natural communities of economic and social group life rather than the lines of government administrative areas. But the average parish in these case studies is about 20 per cent larger than the average market community. The average population (due to the fact that some *hsien* cities and larger parishes are included) is about 40 per cent greater than the population of what Professor Tayler describes as an ideal rural community in China "for a rich social and a diversified economic life, within easy walking distance of a suitable center." The majority of the sample parishes studied come near his standard of size and population, and this is an encouraging sign in the development of the rural church. Both the *hsien* and the ordinary *ch'ü* or other subdivision are too large for satisfactory parish work. The area and population of one village is usually too small.³

Natural groupings of villages in areas of three to ten miles radius, with a common economic and social center and from 5,000 to 30,000 people depending upon the density of population, seem to offer the most suitable and hopeful field for the planting and nurture of rural churches which may ultimately become rooted in the culture and life of their communities.

³ *The Chinese Recorder* and other church periodicals in China have carried reports of the experiment in Christian reconstruction of a *hsien* in Lichwan, Kiangsi; and of an experiment centering on one village in the Paoting area, Hopei (Fanchuang). Mimeograph Series No. 35 of the Agricultural Missions Foundation, New York, is a brief account of the Fanchuang experiment, "An Experiment in Christian Rural Reconstruction," which was limited to one village. With the exception of these two projects, experiments in rural reconstruction or rural service by Christian colleges, theological schools or church bodies are generally in the laboratory of a rural community consisting of a group of villages.

III. GENERAL SURVEY OF COMMUNITY CONDITIONS

THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE CHURCH

The aim of the questions in this part of the survey was to discover community conditions and needs affecting the life of the rural people and the present or future task of the church. The limits of this volume will permit only the reporting of some sample data. These will be supplemented by a brief discussion of the significance for the church of the fourteen environmental factors studied and by a few important facts from other surveys of rural conditions in China.

I. *Historical*

In no country more than in China have history and tradition left their mark upon the rural culture of today. The roots of present social organization reach far into the past. Every rural community has its own folklore, traditions, customs, ways of thinking and doing, types of social life which come down from long ago. The land is the burial ground of innumerable generations. Ancestral halls, monuments and temples symbolize worship of the past. The common language is full of references to old heroes and sages. Attitudes to government today are affected by inherited conceptions of government through centuries of imperial rule. Old religious customs are not easily modified.

To understand village life today one must appreciate the influence of the past, the long history of agriculture in China, the important place of the farmer and of farming in Chinese social history, the deference to rural occupations and interests in Chinese literature and art, the development of village self-government, the story of changes in land ownership, the background of important festivals in rural life, and the richness and variety of the inherited culture even where extreme poverty prevails.

Some of the questions which historical factors in the environment raise for the Christian church are: What elements of the historical rural culture should be preserved and what discarded? What should be the Christian attitude toward the past and toward change, toward old customs and toward modern innovations? How can Christianity best help in the reconstruction of village life upon foundations of the past? One of China's great scholar-philosophers, Liang Shu-

ming, who has been a leader in the Shantung rural reconstruction movement, although not a Christian, insists that there are cultural and religious values in village life as it has been transmitted from the far past which must be preserved at all costs and made the basis of the new rural society.

Surveyors were asked to give a brief account of the history of the local community studied, of especially significant historical events, and of the most interesting old customs and folkways observed. (Questions 6, 7, 8.)

2. *Geographical and Topographical*

(9, 10) Geographical factors have profoundly influenced rural life in China. This is abundantly proved by Dr. George B. Cressey in his well-known book, *China's Geographic Foundations*.¹ Agriculture and rural society show marked differences according to geographical regions. Topography, mountains and rivers, land and soils, climate, wind and rains, affect not only the crops but also the ways of living and the mental outlook of the rural people. The clan-village which Kulp describes has developed in the mountains of south China;² the village society pictured by Arthur H. Smith in his *Village Life in China*³ developed on the loess plains of north China. Generalizations about China as a whole are impossible.

Rainfall which averages about twenty inches per year in north China, forty in east and central China and sixty in south China, determines to a considerable extent what crops may be grown. The College of Agriculture of the University of Nanking divides China into eight important regions according to prevailing temperature in summer and winter, the amount of rainfall and the chief agricultural products. But in the same region there may be wide variations in rainfall from one year to another. This results in floods and droughts, China's perennial problem. Mallory says that according to Chinese historical records there have been at least 1,013 drought-famines and 658 floods in China proper between the first and the nineteenth century.⁴ Since the establishment of the

¹ Cressey, G. B., *China's Geographic Foundations*. Another valuable book in this field is: Tawney, R. H., *Land and Labor in China*.

² Kulp, D. H., II, *Country Life in South China, The Sociology of Familism*.

³ Smith, Arthur H., *Village Life in China*.

⁴ Mallory, W. H., *China, Land of Famine*.

republic in 1911 there have been at least fifteen serious floods in the Yellow River valley.

Other important factors in the physical environment of the rural community are: the amount of land being cultivated or available for cultivation,⁵ soil and climate as they affect crop yields, irrigation and drainage, and resulting standards of living. The human adjustment to the natural environment is seen in the different types of houses in north and south China, in standards of living and comforts available, in the structure of the rural community and in the physical energy of the farmer. The human reaction to the forces of nature, the philosophy of life developed by daily contact with the productive "good earth," the problems raised by natural disasters and famines, the possibility of modifying unfavorable factors in the geographic situation, the appreciation and wise use of natural resources, the conservation of soil and of forests, and the social life which develops along with a common vocation such as the tilling of the land—are all stuff out of which a religious view of life is formed and therefore must be given serious consideration by the Christian worker in rural China.

Brief questions in the Survey Schedule sought data from the local communities studied on general topography of the region, amount of water available, character of the soil, rainfall, and extent of famines in recent years. This information as it affects the particular communities and churches surveyed can be checked by more extensive studies which have been made.

3. *Population*

The population of China has been variously estimated to be between 400,000,000 and 500,000,000. The Ministry of Interior of the National Government gave out figures in 1936 based largely upon reports from *hsien* governments which brought the total population up to 466,207,184.⁶ Six-sevenths of all the people of China live in the inner eighteen provinces, or basic China, which constitute one-third of the total area. This results in great density of population in some regions, especially the fertile river valleys. In Kiangsu province there are 800 people to the square mile, in

⁵ J. L. Buck's studies on Land Utilization in China furnish much fresh data on these problems.

⁶ *Ministry of the Interior, Bureau of Statistics, Report for 1936.* (Chinese.)

Chekiang 508, in Shantung 465. From 1,200 to 2,000 inhabitants per square mile are found in some densely populated rural regions of the Yangtze and Yellow River valleys. In proportion to cultivated land (less than one-fourth of the total area of China) the figure is still higher: in the north China plain 1,074 per square mile, in the lower Yangtze valley 1,355, in southwest China 1,603. These statistics may be compared with the United States which has 48 persons per square mile of cultivated land. It naturally follows that the average rural community in China has a much larger population than the average rural community in the United States.

At least 70 per cent of the population in China is agrarian. Mr. D. K. Lieu of the Bureau of Statistics of the National Government has made an estimate of 71 per cent. Professor C. M. Chiao of the University of Nanking puts the figures at 73 per cent.⁷ But more than this proportion of all the people live in rural areas. Merchants, tradesmen, artisans, non-farming labor, gentry and teachers, government officials and police bring the percentage well above 80 per cent. The 1922 Survey Volume estimated that 89 per cent of the population lives in towns and villages of less than 10,000.⁸ The same survey listed only 50 cities of 100,000 population or over, and 91 cities between 50,000 and 100,000.⁹ The number of large cities has increased only slightly since 1922.

Even the cities serve rural areas to a great extent. The total population of the twelve *hsien* cities in this Survey, where rural churches are located, is only 5.4 per cent of the total population of their *hsien*. But lest these samples be considered rather as large agricultural towns, six big cities of 100,000 to 400,000 inhabitants were selected at random and their population compared with the population of the rest of the *hsien* in which they are located, which would be chiefly rural. It was found that the percentages of population in the city and in the rural area of the *hsien* outside of the city were as follows:

⁷ See Chiao, C. M., *Rural Population and Vital Statistics for Selected Areas of China*, 1929-1931. A study of 12,456 families (University of Nanking, 1931). *Some Aspects of the Chinese Population Problem* (University of Nanking, 1930). And also Chiao's recent book on *Rural Economics* (in Chinese) which summarizes various population studies.

⁸ *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. 12.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Appendix, p. lxxviii.

THE RURAL COMMUNITY

	<i>Per cent of population in hsien city</i>	<i>Per cent of population in rural part of hsien</i>
Shaohsing, Che.	34.7	66.3
Kaifeng, Hon.	30.0	70.0
Sunwei, Tung.	16.2	83.8
Siangtan, Hunan	60.0	40.0
Hwaian, Ku.	26.4	75.6
Anking, An.	21.9	78.1

Many other population facts are significant for the rural social and religious worker, but only a few of them can be mentioned here. The mean and median size of the Chinese farm family is 5.25 and 4.48 according to one extensive survey made.¹⁰ Eleven regional researches into birth rate show variations of from 29.6 to 58.4 per thousand, with a mean average of 35.4.¹¹ Buck's recent survey which included 12,456 families and 67,643 persons showed a birth rate of 38.3.¹² Eleven death rate studies indicate a variation of from 15.1 to 35.6 per thousand, and a mean average of 25.5. Buck's last survey gives 27.1 per thousand.¹³ The net increase of population is, therefore, about 8 per thousand each year. This means a population growth in all China of three millions every year. Improvements in health conditions would increase the rate of growth unless the birth rate were correspondingly lowered. J. L. Buck concludes from his Land Utilization studies that one-half of the population dies before the age of 28.¹⁴ A high infant mortality rate is partly responsible. Buck's studies show 156 deaths per thousand each year.

The rapid growth of China's population during the last two centuries has been retarded at times or in certain sections by famine, disease, civil war and banditry, infanticide and abortion. But the natural fertility of Chinese women, early marriages and the ancestor worship cult together with the strong desire for sons and grandsons to carry on the line, have been stronger forces. The increasing pressure of population in rural areas has led to division of farm holdings, weakening of the old system of economic self-sufficiency and lower standards of living. The impact of the West in the

¹⁰ Chiao, C. M., *op. cit.*

¹¹ Chiao, C. M., *op. cit.*

¹² Chiao, C. M., *op. cit.*

¹³ From J. L. Buck, *Land Utilization in China* (University of Chicago, 1938).

¹⁴ Buck, J. L., *op. cit.*

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

nineteenth century only made the problem more severe. Today as the government of China tries to provide more secure and healthful conditions for the people of the villages, it finds that these improvements may result in an even more rapid growth of population. Many solutions are being proposed and the Christian worker in rural China must face the ethical questions involved in them: industrialization of the cities in order to draw surplus population from the villages, development of rural industries or supplementary occupations, agricultural improvements, redistribution of land, colonization of new areas, birth control, war.

The Ministry of the Interior Survey in sex distribution (1928) gives an average for sixteen provinces of 124.66 males to 100 females. Buck's surveys shows that males predominate in the earlier years of life and females in the later years.

Age distribution is another important fact to consider. Buck's figures based upon a survey of 58,000 families in twenty-two provinces are given below.¹⁵ They will be referred to later in connection with the age distribution analysis of rural church membership.

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Per cent of population</i>
0—4	13.5
5—9	11.4
10—14	9.9
15—19	9.3
20—24	8.6
25—29	8.4
30—34	6.7
35—39	7.1
40—44	5.6
45—49	5.7
50—54	4.1
55—59	3.8
60—64	2.6
65—69	1.6
70—74	0.9
75—79	0.5
80—84	0.2
85—	0.1
	100.0

(11-16) The questions which the surveyors were asked to answer on population were comparatively simple ones. Sixty reported

¹⁵ Buck, J. L., *op. cit.*

population statistics for the *hsien* or gave an estimate, forty-five gave figures on the population of the subdivision of the *hsien* in which the church is located. Forty-two made an estimate on the density of the population in the area studied. These figures have been checked by statistics on density of population from larger surveys and have been a help in estimating the population of the market community and parish.

In twelve communities surveyors report that there has been a decrease in population during recent years, due chiefly to communist disturbances, banditry or famine. One community reports a large increase in population through immigration, and five others report considerable immigration. Migration may be interprovincial or intersectional. The extent of the migration from one region to another, from one community to another, or from country to city, has been carefully studied. The surveyors in these community studies do not report extensive movements of population. The war, however, has caused the greatest migration in China's history from the cities to the villages and from coastal provinces to the interior.

Only eight surveyors (11 per cent) estimate the agricultural or genuinely rural population at less than 80 per cent of the whole community. Three surveys report vital statistics secured from *hsien* government offices. Most of the surveyors said that such statistics are not available or that they do not have access to them. The *hsien* in which the Shunhwachen community (Church No. 30) is located has been keeping the best vital statistics of any *hsien* in China. Survey No. 30 gives a summary of interesting statistical data secured from the offices of the *hsien* government. In this *hsien* 36 per cent of the population are children under sixteen years of age.

4. *Political*

Political factors which condition the work of the rural church include: local government in its changing forms; various reforms in *hsien* administration and extension of social services on a large scale; political administration and taxation as they affect the farmer; political abuses of various kinds and their effect on rural life; banditry and disorder or the maintenance of conditions of security; and new methods of mass organization and training being introduced into the villages. In some rural areas communist propaganda and economic programs have left a deep mark and the struggle

between the National government and the communist army for several years caused serious disturbance and suffering to sections of the population. Within recent years military training of able-bodied young farmers has been promoted in some provinces and the villagers have been called upon to help in preparations for national defense. This survey was in process of completion when the war started between China and Japan. This conflict is stirring the rural masses all over China in ways utterly unforeseen a few years ago. Even in remote villages the consciousness of nationalism has been growing rapidly and the present struggle for national liberty is intensifying national feeling tenfold. The thousands of village churches in China are set in this turbulent political environment.

(30) A few questions on political conditions in the local communities were included in the Survey Schedule. To what extent has the *Kuomintang* or People's Party which established the National government in China reached out into rural areas? Thirty-seven communities (51 per cent) report a *Tang-pu* or branch office of the Party, thirty-two (44 per cent) report that there is no local branch. Eighteen (25 per cent) think that the influence of the Party organization is moderate, ten (14 per cent) that it is weak, nine (12 per cent) that it is negative. The activities of Party branches include: announcing or posting news, political propaganda, co-operation with government agencies in the county, relief work, executing orders from above, publishing a newspaper, advising citizens' organizations.

(31) Questioned regarding the influence of communism in the communities studied, six surveyors (9 per cent) say that it is moderately strong, nineteen (26 per cent) that it is weak, forty-four (60 per cent) that communist influence is negative. Five indicate that communist influence was once strong but now is weak.

(33) Questions regarding nationalistic feeling, anti-foreign feeling, anti-Christian feeling and the strength of political propaganda in the communities were answered as follows:

	Strong	Moderate	Weak	Negative	No answer
	(In per cent of sample communities)				
Nationalist feeling	24.7	49.3	17.8		6.2
Anti-foreign feeling	15.0	17.8	28.8	28.8	9.6
Anti-Christian feeling	1.4	9.6	30.3	41.1	9.6
Political propaganda	13.7	32.9	30.1	15.0	8.3

5. *Agricultural and Industrial*

"China is a country whose structure of civilization has for centuries stood solidly upon the vast foundations of her agriculture, and in the day of her rebuilding it is pertinent for those interested in her future development to study as intensively as possible what part agriculture must play in the new China that is to come."¹⁶ A few of the most pertinent facts on agricultural and industrial conditions in rural communities, taken from recent surveys by trained investigators, are here summarized.

The geographical extent of China, and the great variety of soils and climates, make possible a considerable diversity of crops. The country is practically self-sufficient in the matter of food supply. But in spite of it on the whole good physical basis Chinese agriculture is severely limited by the number of people who must subsist upon it. The average farm holding of an owner is only 4.22 acres, of a tenant farmer 3.56 acres.¹⁷ This may be compared with an average farm holding of 63.18 acres in England and 156.8 acres in the United States. Small holdings result in comparatively low standards of living, small and often uncomfortable houses, and limited educational and recreational advantages. There is little margin for "advancement." Were it not for his marvelous physical resistance and powers of recovery the Chinese peasant would be overwhelmed by the struggle for a living and recurring natural disasters. Yet in peaceful times and in good harvest years there is much enjoyment of life in rural communities.

In China 90 per cent of the farm area is planted in crops, as compared with 42 per cent in the United States.¹⁸ The farmer produces much of the food consumed by the family, 83.3 per cent of the entire amount needed.¹⁹ The crop covering the largest area is wheat in north China and rice in east China. The five cereals, rice, wheat, kaoliang, millet and corn, constitute 70 per cent of the total food-stuffs. Fifty-four per cent of all crops are sold for cash, to meet the farmers' requirements for ready money, but the total cash income

¹⁶ Buck, J. L., "Agriculture and the Future of China," reprinted from the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Publication No. 2444 (1930).

¹⁷ Buck, J. L., *Land Utilization in China*, Ch. IX.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Ch. VII.

¹⁹ Buck, *Chinese Farm Economy*, p. 356.

is necessarily small even in good years.²⁰ Chinese agriculture suffers from lack of animal industries. The man-labor requirements in cultivation of the land are very high. Labor is unequally distributed over the year. Two-fifths, approximately, of the labor on the farm, is performed by members of the family, two-fifths by the operator himself, and another one-fifth by hired labor. The farm family thus plays an important part. "In summarizing the data on yields, it is safe to say that the agriculture of China is not as intensive as has been supposed, and that yields can be increased by the use of better seed, more fertilizer, and the utilization of labor now idle."²¹

In many areas deforestation has been serious and the land has been badly affected by the loss of trees and consequent erosion. In certain regions fishing, the raising of silkworms, cultivation of fruit and other rural occupations supplement income from farming. Plant and animal pests and diseases present a serious problem everywhere. Land on which poppy is grown for opium could support six million persons.

Through centuries of experience the Chinese farmer has adapted himself to conditions and has developed many skillful methods.²² Some western observers have given these methods high praise. But there are many difficulties and problems which can be solved only by scientific study and practice. Scientific agriculture is very new in China but it is already carrying on research and experiments in many fields: selection of improved seeds and strains, fight against plant and animal diseases, improved methods of cultivation suited to small holdings, efficient use of human and animal labor, animal husbandry, more variety of crops and fruits and vegetables in order to improve diet, development of rural subsidiary industries, readjustment of crops in certain areas and the reclamation of waste land, reforestation. Only a beginning has been made but it is a significant beginning in which Christian agricultural schools and research stations have had an important part. Now that agricultural extension work is beginning rural churches have a larger opportunity to help in the betterment of agricultural conditions.

In this Survey investigators were asked to check the important

²⁰ Buck, *Chinese Farm Economy*, p. 356.

²¹ Buck, J. L., "Chinese Rural Economy," in *Journal of Farm Economics*, XII, No. 3, July, 1930.

²² See F. H. King, *Farmers of Forty Centuries*, for interesting descriptions of old methods of agriculture in China, written by a western specialist.

and most important agricultural needs in the sample rural communities. The results represent only the observations and impressions of missionary and Chinese rural workers but they are of value because they present a picture of agricultural conditions and problems which the rural church must take into account. The facts from other surveys described above and the following list of agricultural needs have many implications for the rural church in China, its leadership and program and its hope of achieving self-support.

(54) *Agricultural Needs.*

Most important needs recognized are, in order of the first five: better seeds, better animal breeds, better control of animal diseases, better fertilizers, better farming methods. Most important and important needs combined, are in order of the first six: better seeds, better control of insect pests, better tools, better control of plant diseases, better control of animal diseases and more or better supplementary industries. (See Table IV)

6. *Economic and Commercial*

Economic factors in the rural environment of the rural church are closely related to the agricultural. More data have been gathered in this field perhaps than in any other field of rural life in China.

One problem is the value of the farm business. According to Buck's earlier studies,²³ the average total capital invested is only 1,769 *yuan* (U.S. \$934) and is lower by one-fourth in north China than in east central China. Three-fourths of this investment is in land and after that the highest proportion is in buildings. Very little capital is represented in livestock or in farm implements. Farm receipts average only 376 *yuan* (U.S. \$199) per farm, with a difference of 278 *yuan* (U.S. \$147) in north China and 486 *yuan* (U.S. \$257) in east central China. About two-fifths of the receipts are from grains and two-fifths in produce, mostly grains, consumed by the farm family. Livestock brings less than 5 per cent of the total receipts. Expenses are also low. The average expenses are only 137 *yuan* (U.S. \$72) per farm; they are about two and a half times

²³ Summarized in Buck, J. L., "Chinese Rural Economy," *Journal of Farm Economics*, XII, No. 3, July, 1930. U. S. currency figures calculated at average exchange rate of 1.89 Chinese *yuan* to one U. S. dollar between 1922-1925 when Dr. Buck was making his surveys.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

greater in east central than in north China. This leaves 239 *yuan* (U.S. \$127) as the average farm earnings or income (farm receipts minus farm expenses), including food consumed by the family and all cash receipts. Hired labor is found to be the largest single item of expense. After all expenses are subtracted from the receipts, the amount of money the typical farm family has to live on, aside from food, raw materials for clothing and rent supplied from the farm is only 138 *yuan* (U.S. \$73) a year. Nearly half of the farmers, however, have some source of income other than farming, but even so, the average from this source is only 34 *yuan* (U.S. \$19) per year. "Such a small farm business means small profits for the farmer and a quality of living determined by a small scale business." It also means a very limited margin of cash for educational, social and religious uses.

TABLE IV. AGRICULTURAL NEEDS IN 71 SAMPLE RURAL COMMUNITIES AS CHECKED BY SURVEYORS

	<i>Per cent of communities in which this need is</i>		
	<i>Most important</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Not important</i>
Better seeds	67.1	21.9	11.0
Better animal breeds	37.0	30.1	32.9
Better fertilizers	35.6	32.9	31.5
Better farming methods	35.6	38.3	26.1
More varieties of agricultural products	21.9	31.5	46.6
More varieties of fruits	21.9	41.1	37.0
More vegetable farming	15.0	34.3	50.7
Better control of insect pests	31.5	52.0	16.5
Better control of plant diseases	21.9	49.3	28.8
Better control of animal diseases	37.0	38.3	24.7
Better tools	26.0	52.1	21.9
More intensive farming	5.5	15.1	79.4
Cultivation of waste lands	11.0	19.2	69.8
Better irrigation	17.8	19.2	63.0
Better protection from floods	16.5	20.5	63.0
Farm machinery	12.3	27.4	60.3
More or better supplementary industries	30.1	45.2	24.7
More farm labor	1.4	6.9	91.7

Buck's survey shows that the average expenditure per farm household for the four physical necessities is 136.29 *yuan* (U.S. \$72) for food, 25.32 *yuan* (U.S. \$12.38) for fuel and light, 17.31 *yuan* (U.S. \$9.14) for clothing, and 11.32 *yuan* (U.S. \$5.98) for rent. All other items amount to only 38.08 *yuan* (U.S. \$20.12).²⁴ The expenditure per household of 5.7 persons in the farm families studied in China may be compared with the expenditure of \$1,598 per family of 4.8 in the United States or with \$508 per family in Japan and \$1,263 in Denmark (in U.S. currency).

Another important economic problem is land tenure. Buck says, "Over three-fourths of the farmers in north China are owners, but less than one-half in east central China. There seems to be no apparent difference in the size of farms owned by operators and those only partly owned or wholly tenant. A study of labor earnings on the three types of farms shows rather astonishingly that the owner earns less than either the part owner or the tenant." But, of course, the tenant does not own the capital investment. Buck gives the average percentage of owners, part-owners and tenants in different regions of China as follows:²⁵

	Per cent		
	Owners	Part-owners	Tenants
North China	76.5	13.4	10.1
East Central China	48.3	21.2	30.5

Chang Hsin-i's figures are:²⁶

Northern and North-east provinces	51.0	19.0	30.0
Yellow River Valley	69.0	18.0	13.0
Yangtze River Valley and South China	32.0	28.0	40.0

Buck found that the landlord receives an average of 29.1 per cent of farm receipts, and the tenant 70.9 per cent. The average rent per *mow* (one-sixth of an acre) paid by the tenant to the landlord is 4.43 *yuan*²⁷ (U.S. \$2.35 per *mow* or about \$14.10 per acre). Buck shows that present rents should be reduced 22 per cent on an average in order to make them fair on the principle of dividing

²⁴ Buck, J. L., *Chinese Farm Economy*, p. 390.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁶ Chang Hsin-i in *Chinese Statistical Monthly*, III, No. 6.

²⁷ Buck, J. L., *Chinese Farm Economy*, p. 165.

receipts in proportion to expenses. But there are variations by regions.

Buck's investigations in seventeen localities showed an average tax rate of 1.08 *yuan* (U.S. \$.57) per acre but there were wide variations.²⁸ The rate in one locality was \$.10. In Kiangning experimental *hsien* (in which Church No. 30 is located) the tax rate on best farm land in 1937 was 5.34 *yuan* (U.S. \$1.61) per acre.

The problems of loans and credits for farmers is an insistent one. Studies in several areas by the National Agricultural Research Bureau show considerable variations by areas but an average of 94.34 *yuan* (U.S. \$28.56) per farm family.²⁹ High interest rates on loans have prevailed in rural China and have often increased in famine years. Farmers make loans from money-lenders, pawn shops, grain dealers and others, not only for agricultural purposes but also to meet social needs and sometimes for wasteful amusements. "In Suining, Ku., a careful observer estimated that 25 per cent of the borrowing was for economic and 75 per cent for social purposes (weddings, funerals, gambling), showing that poverty has its roots not only in poor agricultural conditions and credit facilities but also in pauperizing social customs and in unwholesome pleasures. As a result of this unwise expenditure borrowing is on the increase."³⁰ In recent years the rapidly developing cooperative movement in China has begun to meet the problem of loans and credits to farmers for good purposes by loans at much lower rates of interest than generally prevail.

The market is a vital center of rural economic life. In north China and Szechwan and in most mountainous areas there are periodic market days coming usually three times every ten days. On other days the market center is very quiet. In central and south China there is usually a market every day.

Other economic problems of rural life have to do with: marketing methods and price changes, the place of the grain dealer and other middlemen, present forms of economic cooperation in the villages and possible improved methods of cooperation, economic waste through heavy wedding and funeral expenses and superstitious

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

²⁹ Statistics from National Agricultural Research Bureau, Nanking, 1937. Conversion of 1937 currency figures into U. S. currency at exchange rate of 3.30.

³⁰ Price, F. W., *A Glimpse of Rural Needs and the Rural Church in China*, p. 26. (University of Nanking, 1926.)

practices, increasing wants through introduction of manufactured products and their effect upon standards of living, the effect of urban centers and industrialization upon rural economy, land policies in relation to the farmer, the effect of national and international conditions upon living standards in local communities. The present conflict in the Far East is uprooting millions of farmers and is disrupting farm economy more than any other disaster in China's modern history. What all the results will be cannot now be foreseen.

The data on economic factors in the environment gathered from 73 sample communities will not be summarized here. But the relation of economic conditions and needs to the work of the rural church, especially to problems of financial support and possible program, is clearly apparent. Moreover, the whole economic situation in rural China is a challenge to work out a Christian economic philosophy.

7. *Social Factors, Social Organization and the Family*³¹

Problems for study under this heading include:

(1) The Chinese rural family system; the family as a social, economic, political, moral and religious unit in Chinese villages; strong and weak points of the family system and elements to be preserved; ancestor worship.

(2) The rural home; relations between men and women in rural life; social standing of women; sex relations; engagement and marriage customs.

(3) Social classes in rural China; rich and poor, landowner and tenant, native resident and immigrant; town and village; occupational classes and guilds; conflicts or feuds between classes.

(4) Social organizations in rural China; for social and recreational purposes; for economic purposes; for mutual aid and philanthropy; religious and secret societies.

(5) Social customs in rural China; family customs, festivals, customs relating to work and property, etiquette and manners; to what extent are the old moral standards changing?

(6) Centers of social life in the rural community; teashops, temples, fairs, homes.

(7) Social intercourse between neighborhoods and communities; between rural communities and the city.

Because of the importance of the family system and of social con-

³¹ Many studies have been made of various phases of Chinese social and family life. K. S. Latourette, *The Chinese, Their History and Culture*, Ch. XVII, "Social Life" is an excellent summary.

ditions and changes to the young churches in rural communities some of the data from the case studies of 73 communities are given.

(109) *Social Conflicts*

TABLE V. SOCIAL CONFLICTS IN 73 SAMPLE
RURAL COMMUNITIES

<i>Type of conflict</i>	<i>Per cent of communities in which the conflict is</i>				
	<i>Very common</i>	<i>Common</i>	<i>Rare</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Not checked</i>
Feuds and quarrels between village factions	2.8	31.5	47.9	9.6	8.2
Feuds between villages	...	9.6	45.2	37.0	8.2
Conflicts between landlords and tenants	5.5	20.5	39.7	26.0	8.3
Conflicts between natives and immigrants	1.4	4.1	24.7	57.5	12.3
Conflicts between town and village people	1.4	5.5	31.5	53.4	8.2

The most common types of conflict appear to be those between factions in villages and between landlords and tenants. The percentage of conflicts between natives and immigrants and between town and village people is lower than some writers have supposed. Three surveys (Churches Nos. 4, 9, 7) report that feuds between villages have decreased in recent years and this bears out other testimony. The ordinary small market-town and its tributary villages are very interdependent. Only one community in Shantung (Church No. 42) in a densely populated area of small villages, reported serious conflict between rural and town people. In only four communities were all five types of social conflicts checked as "unknown."

(116) *Social standing of women.* One community survey reported the general social standing of men and women to be equal (1.4 per cent). This is a clan settlement of less than one thousand people within a radius of five *li*, in Hunan province, where the church has successfully penetrated the family system. Forty-eight surveys (65.7 per cent) report the status of women as slightly inferior, twenty-one (28.7 per cent) as very inferior to men. Two of the latter surveys also checked "oppressed status." Three surveyors (4.1 per cent) did not reply to this question.

In 26 communities (35.6 per cent) women work in the fields; in 8 communities (11.10 per cent) they work at harvest time; in 13 communities (17.80 per cent) some women do farm work or undertake particular tasks connected with farming, making a total of 64.4 per cent. In 18 communities (24.6 per cent) women are reported as not working in the fields. The question was not answered in 8 surveys (11.0 per cent).

(117) *Isolation of women and foot-binding.* Village women are supposed to be held by their homes and villages. But 14 surveys (19.2 per cent) report that women leave their village very often, 33 (45.2 per cent) that they leave often. In only 24 communities (32.9 per cent) are women said to leave their villages seldom. (Two surveys, or 2.8 per cent, did not reply.)

The binding of the feet of girls and women is decreasing rapidly. In 9 of the communities studied (12.3 per cent) it is still a common practice; in 18 communities (24.6 per cent) it is disappearing, in 21 communities (28.8 per cent) it is rarely seen, and in 23 communities (31.5 per cent) it is now unknown. (Two surveys, or 2.8 per cent did not reply.) It is interesting to note that 14 of the 22 communities where the practice is unknown are in the two southern provinces of Kuangtung and Fukien; the rest being scattered in Kiangsu, Chekiang, Hunan, Szechwan with one in Hopei. The nine communities where the practice is still common are all in north China with the exception of two in isolated sections of Fukien province.

(118) *Freedom between the sexes.* Fifty-four of the community studies (73.9 per cent) report that freedom between the sexes is increasing; as compared with five years ago; 17 (23.3 per cent) indicate that there is no change (no answers from 2 or 2.8 per cent).

(119) *Illicit sexual relations.* Answers to check questions under this heading are classified as follows:

—————Per cent of sample communities—————				
	Common	Increasing	Rare	Unknown Not checked
Illicit relations				
between sexes	26.0	15.1	53.4	... 5.5
Local prostitutes	1.4	9.6	72.6	8.2 8.2
Selling girls for				
prostitution	...	2.8	38.3	50.7 8.2

These data indicate that illicit relations between the sexes are becoming something of a problem in rural communities but that few village women make a business of prostitution.

8. *Recreation*

Although the Chinese farmer is exceedingly busy at certain seasons yet he also enjoys his leisure periods, especially in north and central China where the winters are longer. Buck's studies showed that in these two regions the farmer averages about 194 working days of ten hours each year. This means considerable free time. In the winter months, on the occasion of the periodic popular festivals, and in connection with weddings, birthdays and other social events, there have developed various forms of recreation and amusement. These may be classified as old types and types recently introduced; everyday recreation and seasonal recreation; home recreation and outdoor recreation; private recreation and community recreation; children's games and adult games; and amusements that are socially and morally beneficial or injurious.

The cost of recreation per family for the farmers reported in Buck's surveys is only 1.92 *yuan* (U.S. \$1.01); and this may be compared with \$22.50 for recreation per farm family in the United States.³² This amount seems small but it must be remembered that there are but few commercialized recreations yet in rural China. The cost of seeing a temple theatrical performance or of taking part in a lantern procession may be only a few cents. The possibilities in the improvement of old forms of recreation in the villages and of introducing new forms which are inexpensive and yet interesting and constructive invite study and experiment.

(121) In the Rural Church Survey Schedule a list of familiar forms of recreation in rural China was listed, including both old and modern types. Surveyors were asked to check the common and most common forms in their community and mark those rarely seen or unknown to the people. As far as the writer knows this is the first attempt to learn from sample communities over China how prevalent now are certain older types of recreation and to what extent newer forms are coming into the villages. Naturally there are regional variations in the use of leisure depending upon natural location, climate, social traditions and other factors. But some definite trends are observable, according to these case studies.

³² Buck, J. L., *Chinese Farm Economy*, p. 412.

THE RURAL COMMUNITY

TABLE VI.

PREVALENCE OF VARIOUS FORMS OF RECREATION
AND AMUSEMENT IN 73 SAMPLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

	<i>Percentage of communities in which the recreation is—</i>			
	<i>Very Common</i>	<i>Common or Sometimes Observed</i>	<i>Rare or not Observed</i>	<i>Not Checked</i>
Chinese New Year celebrations	87.7	8.2	...	4.1
Other festival celebrations	37.0	49.3	2.7	11.0
Temple theatricals	27.4	56.1	11.0	5.5
Outdoor theatricals	8.2	41.1	28.8	21.9
Theatre drama	...	16.4	60.3	23.3
Travelling theatrical shows	2.8	32.9	39.7	24.6
Travelling jugglers, magicians and other shows	5.5	72.6	6.8	15.1
Social life and recreation in the tea shops	6.9	24.6	45.2	23.3
Ballad singing (mountain songs)	9.6	50.7	20.5	19.2
Travelling musicians	4.1	41.1	37.0	17.8
Travelling story-tellers	9.6	49.3	24.7	16.4
Lantern processions	16.4	50.7	15.1	17.8
Kite flying	24.7	63.0	2.7	9.6
Pilgrimages to temples for social life as well as worship	39.7	47.9	5.5	6.9
Boxing and wrestling	4.1	49.3	27.4	19.2
Lifting of stone weights	...	12.4	60.2	27.4
Swimming	9.6	47.9	21.9	20.4
Reading of novels and illustrated story books (sold for few coppers by shops or peddlers)	9.6	68.5	8.2	13.7
Enjoyment of parks and gardens	...	11.0	60.2	28.8
Trips to nearest city for recreation	5.5	57.5	23.0	11.0
Games on public playgrounds	2.8	19.2	53.4	24.6
Gramaphones	2.8	65.7	17.8	13.7
Listening to radio broadcasts	6.8	42.5	32.9	17.8
Moving pictures	...	15.1	57.5	27.4
Ball games—basketball, soccer	5.5	47.9	24.7	21.9
Peep shows, Punch and Judy	2.8	60.2	21.9	15.1
Gambling games	37.0	46.6	8.2	8.2
Smoking of native tobacco	64.4	32.9	...	2.7
Smoking of cigarettes	49.3	45.8	2.8	4.1

Other recreations which surveyors added include: Chinese chess (3), playing flute or fiddle with or without singing (2), local telling of stories (1). Had the first two of these been listed they would no doubt have scored a fairly high percentage.

The small percentage who failed to check the most popular amusements indicates that the lack of a check is frequently equivalent to "rare or not observed." From the table below we may draw these tentative conclusions. The celebration of the Lunar New Year and of other festivals, dramatic performances, pilgrimages to temples, lantern processions, and gambling games rank high in popularity. Modern amusements are gradually being introduced and are probably displacing to a certain extent the travelling storyteller and musician. The smoking of cigarettes is now widespread and has become almost as common as the smoking of native tobacco. Theatre dramas, parks and gardens, public playgrounds, and moving pictures are limited largely so far to the cities. Ball games and modern types of musical and dramatic entertainment are being introduced by rural primary schools.³³

9. *Health Factors*

Health conditions in the environment affect not only the death rate and average span of life but also the vitality and happiness of the people. Within recent years some important studies into rural health conditions have been begun, and the national and local governments have launched public health movements.³⁴

Health problems in the villages include: the high rate of infant mortality; frequent deaths of mothers in childbirth; the prevalence of such infectious diseases as typhoid, trachoma and skin troubles, tuberculosis, malaria, and leprosy; losses and costs from sickness; and the large number of physically handicapped persons—blind, crippled, deaf and dumb, etc. In the field of public hygiene there is great need for better sanitation and drainage; improved public toilets; more emphasis upon cleanliness of homes, streets, farm yards; protection against flies and mosquitoes and lice; clean bath-houses for both men and women; improvement of health conditions

³³ A good description of older forms of children's play may be found in an article by L. C. Arlington, "Chinese Juvenile Games," in *China Journal of Science and Arts*, XIII, No. 1, July 1930, 7-14.

³⁴ See Lamson, H. D., *Social Pathology in China*, chs. 9-16, for a survey of health problems in China and a description of modern public health movements and agencies.

in homes; and knowledge and practice of elemental health rules. The physical resistance of the Chinese people built up through long centuries of struggle against disease and the almost universal habit of boiling all drinking water, reduce considerably the effects of sickness in communities. But the needs of rural areas in respect to medical service, public hygiene and preventive medicine are enormous and call for government planning and effort on a wide scale. Private agencies such as Christian hospitals and health centers can cooperate.

According to Buck's studies an average of 4.40 *yuan* (U.S. \$2.33)³⁵ is spent per farm family for maintenance of health. This expenditure generally goes to old style native practitioners and to Chinese medicine shops. In some communities much also is spent on priests, exorcism and magic, and superstitious methods of healing disease.

Although mission hospitals, and government and private hospitals are mostly located in the larger cities, many have drawn patients from the surrounding villages and some have attempted extension clinics. More recently some have become interested in public health service in certain rural areas.³⁶ The number of western trained doctors and nurses is so limited that systems of clinics and health centers under direction of nurses or public health assistants, with careful supervision is being tried in an experimental way. Every agency of social or religious service in the country can help in the dissemination of health knowledge and in promotion of better health conditions, and here lies a great opportunity for the rural church.

Seed products constitute the bulk of the Chinese rural diet, averaging 91.8 per cent as compared with 38.2 per cent in the U.S.A.³⁷ The caloric content is usually sufficient but certain specific nutrients for a complete diet are often lacking. Studies in the diet of farm families are being made and experiments in improvement of nutrition within the limits of the farmers' income are being tried.

³⁵ Buck, J. L., *Chinese Farm Economy*, p. 412.

³⁶ *China Year Book*, 1936 (Shanghai), ch. XXIV, Public Health, summarizes important information to date on health conditions in China and on organizations at work in the field of public health and preventive medicine. See also *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact Finders' Reports*, C, Part II, 425-501, for description of medical missions and recent missionary efforts in health work.

³⁷ Buck, J. L., *Land Utilization in China*.

Questions under this heading in the Survey Schedule sought to gather particular data on health conditions and needs from the 73 sample communities. Questions in Part II asked for information on government and private efforts or plans for improvement of rural health conditions in the sample communities.

10. *Communication and Transportation*

Old China had its waterways and roads. To these have now been added trunk railway lines penetrating the inland provinces and more recently a great network of motor roads. The importance of these new lines of communication and transportation not only in linking cities together but also in opening up rural areas to outside influences, cannot be overestimated. Before the outbreak of the war China had 96,345 kms. of surfaced and earth roads and 66,583 more kms. were under construction or projected. The extension of motor bus lines and of more rapid communications has greatly changed the character of "itineration" and supervision of rural churches in many areas.

The benefit to the rural people themselves of the new highways is less apparent. Within the rural communities travel has changed little. Walking is the most common method of travel from one village to another. In some sections of north China the slow cart and in some sections of eastern, central and southern China the slow boat are common means of conveyance. Perhaps less than one-tenth of the village people make use of trains, steam launches, or motor buses. The service area of the ordinary village school is not more than two or three *li* at the most because the children must walk. Villages are usually within "walking distance" of a market or temple center. Much could be done to repair and improve local roads, paths and bridges and for the people of the villages this is as important as great highways. But improved waterways and highways and more railroads will be essential to better distribution of agricultural products and improvement of marketing facilities for the farmer.

China has a remarkably extensive and efficient telegraph and postal system. In 1936 the Chinese Postal Administration reported a total of 2,618 first-class, second-class and third-class post offices and 10,416 postal agencies. Third-class post offices and postal agencies are usually located in the smaller *hsien* cities and larger market-

towns. In addition, 7,547 rural box offices and 21,631 rural stations are listed.³⁸ Most villages are within "walking distance" of a post office, postal agency or box office. There is no rural delivery to villages but the farmer must mail his letters or go for his mail to the nearest postal branch. However, the total number of letters mailed each year in all China is about one per capita and this low average is due largely to the small use of postal facilities by the great rural population.³⁹ Yet the fact that there is a postal system reaching to nearly every village, and that as popular education develops this system will be increasingly a cultural link between different parts of China, between the city and the villages, and between rural communities is a most significant fact. Newspapers, magazines and special literature for the masses are being circulated increasingly to rural areas through the post office.

11. *Cultural and Educational Factors*

Rural China today has many types of elementary schools: old-style village schools giving largely a classical education, improved private schools with some modern subjects, schools established and supported in whole or part by the *hsien* government or administrative subdivisions of the *hsien*, and Christian primary schools. But rural China is still far behind urban China in number of schools, qualifications of teachers, financial support, and school equipment. The Ministry of Education issued statistics in April, 1937, showing that of more than 46 million children of elementary school age in China, 28 per cent are in school. The percentage varies from 8.83 to 61.07 in the inner provinces.⁴⁰ In rural areas the average proportion of children in school would probably not be over 15 per cent. Chinese educators are awakening to the possibilities of the village primary school as a center of new village life and many studies and experiments in improvement of rural education are being initiated.

Kiangning *hsien*, in which Shunhwachen (Church No. 30) is located, reported at the end of 1936 90 main primary schools and 479 branch schools in the whole county of 450,000 people. Over 55 per cent of school age children were enrolled. Of the pupils 81 per cent were boys, 19 per cent girls. Primary education cost the county

³⁸ *China Year Book*, 1936 (Shanghai), pp. 293-298, and conversation of F. W. Price with Mr. W. W. Ritchie, Director-General of Posts in China, December, 1936.

³⁹ Conversation with Mr. W. W. Ritchie.

⁴⁰ *Report of Ministry of Education*, 1936, Nanking. (Chinese.)

government 6.43 *yuan* (U.S. \$1.95) per pupil. Thirty-six per cent of the *hsien* budget was for education. The results achieved in this one county show what can be done. In view of rapidly increasing government efforts in the field of primary education it is a question how long Christian rural elementary schools can or should be continued and whether it would not be better in many cases to invest money and time in a better program of religious education for a larger number of children in the church and community.⁴¹

Some rural normal schools are located in the country but middle schools for secondary education are usually in the larger cities.

No reliable adult literacy statistics for all of China are available. Buck, in his recent survey, concludes that 50 per cent of the males in rural China and 2 per cent of the females above the age of seven have attended school. The published survey of Tingsien, the county where the Mass Education Movement carried on its experiments for several years, gave the following figures from a study of 62 villages.⁴² Of 1,094 men 51.2 per cent were totally illiterate, 6.5 per cent were partially illiterate, 42.3 per cent were literate. Of 658 women, 94.1 were illiterate, .5 per cent partially literate and 5.4 per cent literate. The test of literacy was ability to read simple newspapers, read signs, keep accounts and write simple letters.

The rising interest in mass or adult education has expressed itself through various experiments and movements: Thousand-Character literacy classes, mass education centers (*Min Chung Chiao Yu Kuan*), people's libraries and literature, visual education, bulletin board news, citizenship education in connection with general military training, rural service centers. The Christian church in China has had a worthy share in the beginning of this movement for social education in the villages.

In spite of the high percentage of "book illiteracy," rural folk do not lack social knowledge and experience. Through customs and mores of family and community life which influence them from childhood, through festivals and customs connected with them, through the popular dramas with their depiction of Chinese his-

⁴¹ The 1922 Survey reported 6,229 Christian primary schools in China, in both cities and villages. Probably half of these have since been closed. A later section of this Survey shows that one-half of the sample rural churches have primary schools connected with them. *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. 302.

⁴² Franklin, Lee, *Social Survey of Tingsien* (Chinese), Mass Education Movement, Tingsien, 1933, p. 235.

torical episodes and heroes, through the stories and songs of storytellers and minstrels, through familiar proverbs and common sayings distilled from Chinese classics and literature, through reports which men carrying on business or studying outside bring back to their community, through social contacts in the tea shop and temple and market place, through labor on the soil and close contact with Nature, through group life and activities, and more recently through political propaganda, lectures and the radio—knowledge, experience, ideas, attitudes, beliefs are being gained all the time and a process is going on which we cannot but call social learning. Rural culture as it is transmitted from the past and as it is being modified by the powerful forces at work in modern China, is in itself educative. The rural church is planted in this cultural milieu and it has an opportunity to be an educative and regenerating influence in the changing rural communities of China, if it does not isolate itself from its environment.

12. *Leadership Factors*

An important element in rural society which conditions all programs of reform or service is native leadership. Too little study has been made of the characteristics and possibilities of leaders already existing in the villages who, under skilled direction, could accomplish much for themselves and their communities. Who are the men of influence in rural China? Whom do the village people follow most easily, for good or for evil? Whose advice has most weight? What type of leaders are guiding the thinking and behavior of the people most effectively?

With the changes taking place in rural society we see some old types of village leaders losing influence and new types coming in. There are both the native leaders and the leaders coming in from outside with perhaps better education or a wider outlook. Some of the new kind of village leaders who are emerging are chosen or acclaimed locally as of old, other kinds are being appointed by local governments. And another question is of interest: to what extent are the "elders" still holding sway, or are younger men assuming leadership? A rural reform program and the work of the rural church depends to a large extent upon the kind of leaders who can be found and trained in the villages. Sometimes a promising effort is thwarted by the opposition of leaders of bad or ques-

tionable character, who nevertheless have influence over or are able to threaten the people of the community.

(180) In the Rural Church Survey Schedule, a list of types of leaders was printed. Surveyors were asked to check twice those types of leaders who have the strongest influence in the community, check once those who have moderately strong influence and mark with "O" those who have little or no influence. They were also asked to mark "good" those types of leaders whose influence is especially good and constructive, and mark "bad" those types of leaders whose influence is especially bad or destructive. Surveyors were expected to consult the opinions of the local pastor and church workers and various other local people so the vote in each survey represents the impression of a group which has lived in and has known the community. The summary of the data which follows is offered as a contribution toward a better understanding of the factors of community leadership in rural China.

A study of the survey data shows that there is much variation between communities in the influence of various types of leaders. But the following interpretation may be made of tendencies in rural China as a whole. Heads of families and clans, important merchants in the market center and the gentry hold their influence but the latter include almost as many whose influence is bad as whose influence is good. The money-lenders and *t'u hao* are still influential in many communities and their influence is usually bad. The influence of government officials is increasing and because of government support, the local heads of villages and *hsiang* and of the *pao-chia* mutual guarantee system are becoming more influential than the village "elders." But there are bad as well as good elements in this group while only good influence was noted among "well-known farmers" who are leaders. The influence of large old community families, of teachers of old-type schools (who once were highly respected neighborhood scholars), of bandit chiefs, of leaders of secret societies⁴³ and rascal gangs, and of Buddhist and Taoist priests is evidently on the wane. Making a discount for the Christian bias of the surveyors and for possible prejudice against priests, yet the low percentage of votes given priests and the much higher percentage given to Christian pastors or preachers is very

⁴³ The leaders of secret societies are still very powerful in sections of Shantung, the lower Yangtze Valley, and Szechwan.

TABLE VII. LEADERS OF INFLUENCE IN 73 SAMPLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

Type of leader	Per cent of communities in which the leaders have						
	Strongest influence	Moderately strong influence	Little or no influence	Not checked	Very good influence	Very bad influence	Good and bad checked
Heads of families or clans	42.5	38.3	4.1	15.1	21.9	2.8	75.3
Large 'old families'	6.9	34.2	28.8	30.1	6.9	6.9	84.9
Village elders	15.1	49.3	13.7	21.9	17.8	2.8	79.4
Gentry	43.9	27.4	15.0	13.7	13.7	1.0	71.2
Important business men	23.3	34.2	20.4	21.6	12.3	2.7	83.6
Grain dealers	2.7	13.7	50.7	32.9	1.4	1.4	95.8
Money-lenders	8.2	46.6	27.4	17.8	2.8	19.2	78.0
Large landowners	19.2	26.0	32.9	21.9	1.4	13.7	84.9
T'u-hao ¹	19.2	31.5	30.1	19.2	...	27.4	72.6
Bandit chiefs	6.9	6.9	62.0	24.2	...	11.0	89.0
Liu-mang (rascal) leaders ²	8.2	13.7	49.3	28.8	...	11.0	89.0
Military chiefs or officers	9.6	19.2	37.0	34.2	4.1	...	93.1
Tang-pu, Party leaders ³	6.9	12.3	42.5	38.3	5.5	...	94.5
Government officials	32.9	28.8	17.8	20.5	6.9	2.7	84.9
Leaders of secret societies	2.8	12.3	26.7	58.2	...	4.1	95.9
Well-known farmers	2.8	23.3	38.3	35.6	6.9	...	93.1
Village and hsiang heads ⁴	30.1	38.3	6.9	24.7	12.3	11.0	75.3

¹ T'u-hao literally means "hero of the soil." The term is now used in a disparaging sense to describe strong, clever but unscrupulous fellows who take advantage of the poorer and more ignorant farmers, and is sometimes applied to landlords.

² A liu-mang is a "rolling stone," a rascal, a country gangster.

³ Local officials or leaders of branches of the Kuomintang, People's Party.

⁴ Heads of villages or groups of villages, either elected by the villagers themselves or, more commonly now, appointed by the hsien magistrate or head of the ch'u. They are usually the better educated or more able farmers.

TABLE VII. LEADERS OF INFLUENCE IN 73 SAMPLE RURAL COMMUNITIES—Continued

—Per cent of communities in which the leaders have—

Type of leader	Strongest influence	Moderately strong influence	Little or no influence	Not checked	Very good influence	Very bad influence	Good and bad	Not checked
Heads of <i>Pao-chia</i> ⁴⁴	26.0	41.1	15.1	17.8	11.0	4.1	5.5	79.4
Town heads	26.0	32.9	17.8	23.3	11.0	2.7	4.1	82.2
Police officers	11.0	23.3	37.0	28.7	5.5	1.4	1.4	91.7
Old-type school teachers	5.5	19.2	46.6	28.7	4.1	1.4	1.4	93.1
Modern school teachers	6.9	49.3	19.1	24.7	15.1	...	1.4	83.5
Agricultural experts	1.4	11.0	45.2	42.4	4.1	...	...	95.9
Other experts from outside	1.4	13.7	49.3	35.6	4.1	...	1.4	94.5
Buddhist or Taoist priests	...	11.0	54.8	34.2	...	6.9	...	93.1
Christian pastor, preacher	16.4	43.8	19.2	20.6	28.8	...	...	71.2

⁴⁴ *Pao-chia* is the old tithing or mutual guarantee system whereby the people are divided into groups of tens and hundreds with leaders, revived now in several provinces as a method of local self-government, mutual protection and defense. The heads of the groups are usually farmers.

significant. In a number of the communities studied the Christian pastor has become one of the leading citizens of the community, respected and trusted. The position of Party representatives is on the whole weak but police officers, modern school teachers and agricultural and other experts from outside are beginning to exert a real influence upon the rural communities.

13. *Moral Conditions and Problems*

What are the sources and standards of moral behavior in rural China today? Some of the socially inherited standards and some of the forces modifying these old standards may be mentioned: customs and traditions, social approval and disapproval, moral ideas in stories, dramas and songs, proverbs and common sayings, classical quotations and teachings in common speech, Confucian ethical culture, family mores, religious teachings of Buddhism and Taoism, moral standards in the popular religion, law and legal codes, propaganda of government and social agencies, schools, the press and more recently the radio, Christian teachings and influence.

The tremendous changes taking place in China are beginning to affect ideas and standards of moral behavior among the rural as well as the urban population. Since the rural church is primarily concerned with the regeneration of character and the building of better community life, it is important to know to what extent the "old morality" in families, clans and rural communities is weakening, what outside influences are modifying moral codes, what moral evils are most serious, what problems of right and wrong are most pressing, and what forces for good exist and may be strengthened.

(192) In the Survey Schedule a list of bad or anti-social forms of behavior was printed and surveyors were asked to check twice those forms most common in the communities studied, check once those occasionally observed and mark with "O" those types which were rare or not observed. The list was suggested by a group of rural workers and theological seminary students.

The data received have been analyzed as shown in Table VIII.

Gambling leads the list, being marked as "common" in 54.8 per cent of the communities surveyed, and as occasionally seen in 34.2 per cent. Following gambling the most frequently checked forms of common bad behavior are litigation, quarrelling, usury, business dishonesty, loafing, and destruction of trees for fuel. Litigation re-

TABLE VIII. PREVALENCE OF VARIOUS FORMS OF
BAD OR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR
IN 73 SAMPLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

	<i>Percentage of communities in which the behavior is—</i>			
	<i>Common</i>	<i>Occasional</i>	<i>Rare or uncommon</i>	<i>Not checked</i>
Quarrelling	32.9	49.3	8.2	9.6
Prostitution	9.6	56.2	20.5	13.7
Gambling	54.8	34.2	5.5	5.5
Thieving	2.7	69.8	15.1	12.4
Homicide	2.7	24.7	57.5	15.1
Adultery (one or both married)	12.3	54.8	20.6	12.3
Illicit relations (both unmarried)	2.7	30.1	46.6	20.6
Infanticide	2.7	17.8	60.3	19.2
Abortion	...	32.9	49.3	17.8
Selling of opium	9.6	53.4	24.7	12.3
Smoking of opium	17.8	54.8	20.5	6.9
Selling and use of narcotics	1.4	35.6	49.3	13.7
Destroying of public property	1.4	41.1	43.8	13.7
Kidnapping	2.7	24.7	57.5	15.1
Fights between landowners and tenants	5.5	52.0	38.8	13.7
Loafing, laziness	23.3	60.2	9.6	6.9
Drunkenness	17.8	60.2	15.1	6.9
Robbing the wealthy	4.1	30.1	49.3	16.5
Adulteration of marketed products	8.2	54.8	23.3	13.7
Business dishonesty	26.0	54.8	11.0	8.2
Disputes over land	9.6	63.0	13.7	13.7
Serious fights and feuds	2.8	31.5	9.6	56.1
Cruelty to animals	9.6	39.7	34.2	16.5
Destruction of trees (for fuel)	19.2	57.5	15.1	8.2
Concubinage	13.7	64.4	13.7	8.2
Breaking contracts	11.0	61.6	12.3	15.1
Mob riots	...	20.6	61.6	17.8
Beggary	13.7	67.1	13.7	5.5
Cruelty to daughter-in-law	20.5	60.3	13.7	5.5
Suicides	...	30.1	52.1	17.8
Inferior workmanship	16.4	58.9	13.7	11.0
Oppression of very poor	15.1	43.8	24.7	16.4
Usury, exorbitant interest	26.0	57.5	9.6	6.9
Arson	1.4	19.2	60.2	19.2
Litigation	34.2	56.2	5.5	4.1
Divorce	5.5	47.9	35.6	11.0
Separation (of husband and wife)	1.4	58.9	27.4	12.3

THE RURAL COMMUNITY

fers to the costly method of taking disputes to court. In view of the well-known industry of the Chinese farmer it seems surprising that 23.3 per cent should have marked loafing as common and 60.2 per cent as occasional. But, as has been noted above, the farmer in many communities has long periods of leisure and not a few in some communities waste this leisure time. Combining the percentage under "Common" and "Occasional," the following order of frequency is found:

Gambling	89.0
Usury	83.5
Loafing	83.5
Quarrelling	82.2
Cruelty to daughter-in-law	80.8
Business dishonesty	80.8
Beggary	80.7
Drunkenness	78.2
Destruction of trees	76.7
Disputes over land	72.6
Concubinage	78.1
Breaking contracts	72.6
Smoking of opium	72.6
Adultery	67.1
Selling of opium	64.0
Separation of husband and wife	60.3

Several surveyors indicated that drunkenness is usually limited to festivals, fairs, weddings or other special occasions; the term in Chinese connotes a tipsy condition. The taking of concubines by wealthier farmers or business men evidently continues in many communities. Communities reporting selling and smoking of opium are distributed through many provinces showing that the problem is not so much regional as one of local enforcement of law, public education and provision of opportunities for breaking the habit. On the other hand, the majority of the 26 communities in which occasional sale and use of narcotics was reported are located in north China. Divorce and separation which were almost unknown in the old China are now apparently increasing in rural areas.

The types of behavior marked rare or uncommon in the largest number of surveys, are, in order:

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

Riots	61.6
Infanticide	60.3
Arson	60.2
Homicide	57.5
Kidnapping	57.5
Suicide	52.1

There are marked variations in frequency of certain types of undesirable conduct according to communities and regions but space forbids an analysis of these differences here. The summary given above, however, indicates certain significant conditions and trends in the sample communities as a whole.

14. *Religious Conditions*⁴⁵

In the same way surveyors were asked to check a list of types of religious behavior.

The field of rural religion in China is so large that generalizations are extremely difficult. A study of the so-called three religions of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism and of their sacred literature and cult practices, is not sufficient for an understanding of the peasants. In rural communities religion is an admixture of elements of these religions and also of animism, nature and hero worship, belief in spirits, and sacrifices to ancestors. Rural religion is linked closely to the family and vocational needs of the farmer, to his struggle for a living, and to his social and community interests.

Monasteries, temples and shrines abound in the country as well as in the cities. Often the temple is one of the important centers of a rural community and pilgrimages to temples are a striking form of social-religious expression. The gods worshipped in the villages may vary in different regions although there are some like the god and goddess of the soil who seem to be known everywhere. Temple gods, wayside gods, paper gods, spirits and nature gods—each community has its pantheon. The home as well as the temple is a cen-

⁴⁵ Of the many valuable books and articles on the religious beliefs and practices of the country people of China may be mentioned:

Dore, Henri, *Researches into Chinese Superstitions*, 9 vols., Shanghai, 1914-33.

Reichelt, K. L., *Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism*.

Latourette, K. S., *The Chinese, Their History and Culture*, Ch. XVI, "Religion."

Parker, Albert G., "A Study of the Religious Beliefs and Practices of the Common People of China," in *Chinese Recorder*, LIII, August, 1922, 503-512, and September, 1922, 575-585.

Day, C. B., *Chinese Peasant Cults*. Shanghai. Summarized in *Chinese Recorder*, LXIII, No. 7, July, 1932, "Current Values in Peasant Religion," 419-427. Dr. Day's researches are very illuminating.

ter of religious faith and practice. In the survey of religious practices summarized below every sample community reported worship of the kitchen god. The ancestral hall is the most important building in many villages and worship of ancestors at the hall, at the graves and in homes is a deep-rooted custom in rural China.

(206) *Popular Religion*

TABLE IX. PREVALENCE OF RELIGIOUS AND SUPERSTITIOUS PRACTICES IN 73 SAMPLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

	<i>Percentage of communities reporting each practice</i>			
	<i>Common</i>	<i>Occasionally observed</i>	<i>Rare or unknown</i>	<i>Not reporting</i>
Worship of Heaven and Earth	71.2	21.9	4.1	2.8
Ancestor worship in homes	79.4	17.8	2.8	...
Ancestor worship at graves	76.7	21.9	1.4	...
Worship in ancestral hall	54.8	42.5	2.7	...
Masses for the dead	41.1	42.5	16.4	...
Calling of priests at funerals	42.5	46.6	10.9	...
Worship of paper gods in homes and shops	34.2	46.6	8.2	11.0
Worship of kitchen gods	78.0	22.0	...	...
Burning of paper money and incense	76.6	22.0	1.4	...
Divination, geomancy and fortune-telling	57.5	42.5	...	...
Praying for rain	34.2	58.9	4.1	2.8
Driving away of plague devils	15.1	63.0	15.1	6.8
Village processions to temples	28.8	57.5	12.3	1.4
Idol processions	37.0	52.0	8.2	2.8
<i>Yu-lan hui</i> , feast of ghosts	30.1	23.3	37.0	9.6
Taxing of families for religious festivals	20.6	52.0	21.9	5.5
Calling home of wandering spirits	34.2	56.2	2.7	6.9
Worship of sacred trees and other natural objects	11.0	52.0	27.4	9.6
Vegetarianism for religious merit	24.6	69.8	2.8	2.8
Animal sacrifices	16.4	45.2	30.1	8.3
Worship in fields	9.6	43.9	34.2	12.3
Secret religious ceremonies	5.5	30.1	49.3	15.1
Worship of animals	2.7	19.2	63.0	15.1
Exorcising of devils	16.5	78.0	5.5	...
Use of charms and amulets	23.3	68.5	5.5	2.7
Special ceremonies in connection with planting and harvesting	4.1	45.2	35.6	15.1

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

It is true that temples and ancestral halls are being used increasingly for schools and other social-educational purposes and that religious beliefs and superstitious practices are being modified and even overthrown in certain regions. But the study of sample communities shows that the changes are taking place slowly on the whole. C. B. Day has shown that there are values to be conserved in the popular religion. The religious spirit underlying many superstitious manifestations is not to be condemned. Higher forms of religious faith and fellowship must be substituted for the lower. This transition stage in the religious life of the rural people presents a great challenge to the Christian church.

Worship of ancestors in the home leads as the most common religious practice reported; then follow in order of frequency, worship of kitchen gods, worship of ancestors at graves, burning of paper money and incense, worship of Heaven and Earth (a custom chiefly at the time of Lunar New Year and also before the shrines of the gods of the soil).

Combining the frequencies of "common" and "occasional" the twelve highest percentages are:

Worship of kitchen gods	100.0
Divination and geomancy	100.0
Burning of paper money and incense	98.6
Worship of ancestors at graves	98.6
Worship of ancestors in ancestral hall	97.3
Worship of ancestors in homes	97.2
Exorcism	94.5
Vegetarianism	94.4
Worship of Heaven and Earth	93.1
Prayer for rain	93.1
Calling of spirits	90.4
Priests at funerals	89.1

The highest percentages of rare or unknown cult practices are:

Worship of animals	63.0
Secret religious ceremonies	49.3
<i>Yu-lan hui</i> , Feast of Ghosts	37.0
Animal sacrifices	30.1
Worship in fields	34.2
Special ceremonies at planting and harvesting	35.6

Marked differences between regions make generalizations for all China impossible except in the case of a few practices. For example, the *Yu-lan Hui* or observance of the Feast of Ghosts in the Seventh Moon is much more prevalent in south and central China than in north China. Of the 53.4 per cent of communities in which this festival is commonly or occasionally observed, Kwangtung and Fukiên account for 20.5 per cent. The rest of the communities are almost all in Chekiang, Kiangsu or the central China provinces. Other wide variations are found in animal sacrifices, planting and harvesting ceremonies, secret religious ceremonies, worship of sacred trees and other objects, masses for the dead.

(207) *Increase or decrease of superstitious practices.* Surveyors were asked to note whether superstitious practices in the communities studied are increasing, about the same, or decreasing, as compared with five years ago. One replied that such practices are on the increase (14 per cent); twenty that they are about the same (27.4 per cent); fifty-two that they are decreasing (71.2 per cent.)

(208) *Estimated average expenditure per family for religious practices.* There were sixty-nine replies to this question but several surveyors emphasized the difficulty of estimating an average expenditure. Many gave a figure and added the words "at least that amount." So there are probably more underestimates than overestimates. Wide variations occur, the range being from less than one *yuan* to twenty *yuan* or more per family.⁴⁶

*Estimated expenditures per family for religious practices
in 73 sample communities*

<i>Amount</i>	<i>Percentage of communities</i>
Under 5 <i>yuan</i>	41.1
5-9 <i>yuan</i>	24.7
10-14 <i>yuan</i>	16.4
15-19 <i>yuan</i>	2.7
20-30 <i>yuan</i>	9.6
Not reporting	5.5
	100.0

The mean average estimated expenditure per family for sixty-nine communities is 6.88 *yuan*. This may be compared with the

⁴⁶ The value of the *yuan* in U. S. currency at the time of this survey (1936-1937) was about \$.30.

average of 5.05 *yuan* per family in Buck's studies of 2,370 families in six provinces.⁴⁷

(209) *Secret cults*. Secret religious societies or cults are reported in 23 (31.5 per cent) of the communities. Of these 23 communities 61 per cent are in the two northern provinces of Hopei and Shantung and 24 per cent in Chekiang and Fukien. Hodous' excellent description of secret sects in the 1922 Survey Volume⁴⁸ stresses these same regions and the names of sects reported correspond fairly closely with the names reported by surveyors in this study. However some sects are evidently dying out and the membership and influence of many others is decreasing. Thirty-seven communities reported no secret cults (50.9 per cent).

A study was also made of the number and influence of eclectic religious societies such as the *T'ung Shan Shê*.

(213-225) Data were also sought regarding Mohammedanism and Roman Catholic churches in the communities. (Omitted in this volume.) (227) *Other Protestant Churches*. To find out whether the rural communities studied had more than one Protestant denomination or church group working in them, surveyors were asked to list and describe other churches near in the same location or near-by. Chapels or branch churches of the same parish were not counted. In 37 communities, just about half, there are no other Protestant churches. Five surveyors report churches of the same denomination nearby (6.8 per cent). Thirteen (17.8 per cent) report churches of other Protestant denominations in the community, 5 in the same location, and 8 within 20 *li*. Of these, 3 are Seventh-Day Adventist churches and 2 are churches of small proselytizing sects. The grouping of churches of different denominations occurs usually in the larger *hsien* cities and the churches tend to work in different directions from the city, cordial relations existing. There appears to be no over-churching at present in rural communities such as in the United States. Seventeen surveyors did not reply and presumably there is little duplication in the communities they studied. One surveyor reported that a group of Christians of one denomination, having no church of their own, were attending services at a church of another denomination.

⁴⁷ Buck, J. L., *Chinese Farm Economy*, p. 404.

⁴⁸ Professor L. Hodous has an illuminating account of religious sects in China in the section, "Non-Christian Religious Movements in China," *The Christian Occupation of China*, pp. 27-31.

(228) *Abandoned Churches.* Seven surveys report churches of the same denomination in the community which had been closed; four reported churches of other denominations which had been closed. Two reported closing of Roman Catholic churches. The reasons given are chiefly loss of membership, poor leadership or decreased mission funds. The total number of surveys reporting closed churches (15.1 per cent) is not large.

(220) *Other Churches in hsien.* Thirty-one surveys report churches of the same denomination in adjoining communities, and twenty report churches of other denominations in adjoining communities within a radius of 50 *li*. Relations between churches of the same denominations are generally close. Churches of different denominations report good relations generally but comparatively little contact or fellowship because of distance between the congregations.

The data secured on the total number of other churches in the *hsien* where the rural communities studied are located are not very reliable, since some surveyors had statistics of only their own denomination, others gave figures for the whole denominational district, and many made only general estimates. Some surveyors report that the church studied is the only one in the *hsien*, others report one hundred churches and places of preaching or worship in the *hsien*. The Distribution Survey in the three eastern provinces furnishes better information on this question.



PART II

RURAL RECONSTRUCTION IN THE COMMUNITY

The data secured on rural reconstruction in the communities studied are omitted here. The following is the outline of the survey on this problem:

- I. Rural Reconstruction Work of Provincial and *Hsien* Governments in the Community.
- II. List of Government Institutions and Agencies for Rural Reconstruction.
- III. Extension Work of Agricultural Colleges and Schools.
- IV. Banks and Other Institutions or Agencies Extending Credits and Loans.
- V. Social Education:
 1. People's Education Center
 2. Mass Education or People's Schools
 3. Other Social or Adult Education
- VI. Hospital Extension, Health Centers and Public Health Work.
- VII. Famine Relief Organizations.
- VIII. Local Organizations for Rural Improvement.
- IX. Other Private Agencies for Rural Reconstruction or Service.

A knowledge of what the national, provincial, and *hsien* government agencies and all kinds of private institutions and organizations are doing in the field of rural reconstruction is essential for any rural worker in China today. The rural reconstruction movement presents a great challenge to the church.¹ There are forms of service which the church may initiate and then turn over to agencies with larger resources, and forms of service which it may carry on itself or in cooperation with the local government or community organizations. The rural church has an opportunity to help determine the ideals and dominant spirit of rural reconstruction. Rural churches need to find their place in this significant movement.

¹ For a description of these new rural reconstruction movements, with especial relation to the Christian church, see "The Significance of Religious Education of the New Rural Reconstruction Movement in China," paper by F. W. Price, read at the Annual Meeting of the National Committee for Christian Religious Education in China, November 9, 1934. Published as bulletin by Agricultural Missions Foundation, New York, 1935.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

This section of the study, when completed, will summarize the work of various national and regional agencies and organizations in rural reconstruction, and also present the data from the study of actual programs of village welfare work being conducted in the sample communities, by government or private groups, or by the people themselves.

PART III

THE CHURCH

STUDIES OF 73 SAMPLE RURAL CHURCHES

(About two-thirds of the data secured from 73 sample rural churches regarding their history, membership, leadership, financial support, life and program, together with summaries, analyses, and interpretations are presented in the following pages.)

I. HISTORY

(254) *Beginning of Protestant Evangelism in the Community.* All of the 73 churches studied furnished the approximate date when Protestant evangelism began in their communities. Thirty-two of the dates are before 1900, and 41 since 1900. The mean average number of years since the first evangelistic effort is 36.9. The longest period given is seventy-six years and seven churches give a history of over sixty years since the beginning of preaching. Of these seven communities four are in Fukien province where missionary work began in 1842,¹ two are in Chekiang where missionary work began in 1844,² and one in Shantung which Protestant missionaries entered in 1861.³ In only one community was evangelism begun less than ten years ago. Evangelism refers generally to the preaching of the Gospel by missionaries and Chinese evangelists, distribution of tracts and other Christian literature and the witness of Chinese Christians. Fukien, Shantung and Chekiang are among the earlier fields for rural preaching. "In 1865 all Protestant societies, both old and new, were confining their efforts to the coast provinces and to a few cities in the Yangtze Valley."⁴ Even the China Inland Mission which was to do so much pioneering in the villages of inland provinces, began its work in the cities. By 1875 it was

¹ Latourette, K. S., *A History of Christian Missions in China*, p. 244.

² *Ibid.*, p. 248.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁴ Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, p. 382.

reaching into rural districts.⁵ So it is not surprising that 82 per cent of the sample communities surveyed were entered by Protestant evangelists less than half a century ago.

(255) *History of Organized Christian Groups.* The history of organized Christian groups and churches is even briefer, the mean average being 32.5 years. The following table shows the age of 73 rural churches.

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
More than 60 years	1	1.4
50 - 59 years	8	11.0
40 - 49 years	15	20.5
30 - 39 years	19	26.0
20 - 29 years	12	16.4
10 - 19 years	12	16.4
Less than 10 years	4	5.5
Not reporting	2	2.8
	73	100.0

The comparative youth of these rural churches must be kept in mind in all appraisals of their life and program.

The first evangelist in the community were in 37 cases missionaries (50.7 per cent); in 15 cases they were Chinese evangelists or pastors (20.5 per cent); in 10 cases they were Chinese converts returning to their native homes (13.7 per cent); in 4 cases missionaries and Chinese evangelists, in 3 cases colporteurs, and in 3 cases Chinese evangelistic bands.

The first Christian groups were organized in 55 cases by missionaries, missions or mission-church organizations (75.3 per cent); in 9 cases by Chinese pastors or evangelists (12.3 per cent), in 4 cases (5.5 per cent) by missionaries and Chinese evangelists together, in 5 cases (6.8 per cent) by Chinese converts themselves, and in one case by a colporteur.

Where were these Christian groups first organized? Reports from 72 churches show that 30 of them were organized in a rented building of some kind (41.1 per cent); 10 in purchased buildings (13.7 per cent); 3 in borrowed buildings (4.1 per cent) and 3 in specially constructed buildings (4.1 per cent). In about one-third of the cases,

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 388-389.

23, the first organization took place in a home (31.9 per cent), and 3 cases in donated buildings (4.1 per cent).

Fifty-two churches (71.2 per cent) were first organized as branches of other churches, and 15 (20.5 per cent) as separate or independent churches. Two were organized as churches within a circuit, but more of this type are probably included under the designation "branch churches." Two churches were called "preaching places" when they were first organized.

Nearly one-half of the churches were first organized at a different place from their present location. In most cases this place was only a few *li* distant. Forty-two (57.5 per cent) have continued at their first location, 31 (42.6 per cent) have moved from another town or village since the beginning of the church's history.

To the question "What was the occasion or reason for planting the church in this place?" answers are many and varied. In more than one-third of cases the church followed Christians. Thirteen churches were organized because of the Christians living in the community and 12 because of invitations from converts or inquirers in the community. Thirteen churches were planted as the results of a program of extension evangelism by certain denominations in a given area. Fifteen sites were selected because of good location, in a densely populated area, central to a group of villages, an important market center or easily accessible. Three churches were founded as a result of famine relief work. Other scattered reasons are "to escape official oppression in another place" (1), as follow-up of tent evangelism (1), as a primary-school center (1). Two investigators reported that the churches were not planted; "they just grew up like the churches of the first century." In only one case was a church reported to have an unworthy beginning, with Christians who sought for an organization in order to get special protection.

Many surveyors added interesting and inspiring stories in connection with the witness of Chinese Christians which led to the founding of twenty-five churches in the list. In three cases these first Christians were converted in mission hospitals and returned to their villages to start Christian groups. Many of these converts faced all kinds of opposition and persecution in bringing the church to their native communities. Two were able to secure the use of ancestral halls. Many loaned their homes or donated buildings. One church

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

in Fukien (Church No. 61) began with a convert who won ten of his relatives and friends and many branches spread from this home church. The Shiherpha Church in Chekiang (Church No. 65) was organized by a group of Christians in 1911, and has grown since that time under only lay leadership to a membership of more than three hundred.

(256) *Changes in Location and Property since the Founding of the Church.* The answers to this question are summarized below. In some surveys there was more than one change recorded.

<i>Kind of change</i>	<i>Number Churches</i>
First home, then rented building	5
Home, then rented building, then purchased building	7
Church moved because of loss of members or failure in original place	3
Moved to more central location in community	5
Church building enlarged	4
Change to better location	4
Members build new church	12
Moved to larger or better buildings, rented or purchased	5
New property bought by mission or denomination	8
New property bought by mission and church members	10
New church built by mission, or by mission and local members	11
No important changes since beginning	8

The reasons for moving or for securing a new building were generally the desire for a more central or otherwise better location, the growth of membership and the expansion of the church program. More detailed data upon the present condition of the church property were secured under Section III.

(257) A comparatively small percentage (26 per cent) of the churches report having been closed for any length of time since their founding, in spite of disturbances in many parts of the country. It may be that closing for short periods of time was not recorded. Eight churches had to close for months (in one case for three years) because of communists or bandits in the community. Five churches report being closed during the Boxer uprising, two during the revolution of 1926-1927. One (Church No. 69) was burned by Roman Catholics and suspended for a time. Two churches closed for a period because of financial difficulties and one in order to reorganize. Several churches suffered at times from one or another

kind of disaster or persecution but were able to continue their work in a limited way.

(258) *First Resident Preacher.* In 59 churches answering this question, the first resident preacher was evidently appointed soon after the organization of the Christian group, since the number of years since the date of appointment averages 32.1 while the age of all churches average 32.5. Forty-eight surveyors gave the salary of the first preacher. The range was from three dollars to twenty dollars per month, and the mean average salary per month was 6.60 dollars (Chinese). But these figures can hardly be compared with salaries today because of differences in exchange and increase in costs of living. They do show that the first preachers began with comparatively low salaries.

(259) *Number of Succeeding Preachers and Terms of Service.* A surprising number of surveyors were able to secure lists of names of preachers since the founding of the churches. From the lists given in fifty-nine surveys, we find the average number of resident preachers in the history of a church to be 7.8, and the average term of service to be 3.6 years. A policy of moving men frequently has apparently prevailed. Terms of service above ten years are rare and pastorates of eighteen, nineteen and twenty-five years such as we find in churches 70, 53 and 38 stand out as unusual. In about half the churches the terms of service are fairly regular from the beginning, in the other half there is considerable variation in the length of time different preachers have spent at the church. Nine churches report breaks in the history of the church when there was no resident pastor or preacher and when a mission or Chinese pastor in another center provided temporary supervision. More detailed records might reveal an even larger number of churches which did not have a preacher for certain periods of time. The lists show a tendency in recent years toward longer terms of service. There are advantages in giving churches the benefit of new leadership; on the other hand a good man needs from five to ten years to become thoroughly familiar with his community and to develop a strong church program under the difficult conditions of rural pastorates in China.

(260) Compared with the fairly complete lists of preachers in residence the data on membership at five periods since the founding

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

of the church are very meagre. Many surveyors said that no such records could be found. Growth in membership in twelve churches whose records seem fairly reliable is shown below:

<i>Church Number</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Membership</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Membership</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Membership</i>
4	1906	9	1921	51	1936	108
20	1919	5	1924	120	1936	111 ^a
24	1889	5	1906	19	1936	37
36	1901	4	1916	30	1936	50
43	1920	32	1930	62	1937	154
44	1921	50	1932	150	1937	260
57	1918	7	1928	43	1936	91
56	1927	80			1937	105
59	1911	30	1917	120	1937	170
70	1890	5	1927	14	1937	47
71	1923	48	1932	72	1936	96

(a) The membership of this church, as of others, dropped seriously between 1924 and 1929, but the church has regained lost ground and is now growing rapidly again.

The data on growth in membership during the past five years recorded in a later section (285) are much more complete. These few church records and other studies and observations lead the writer to the conclusion that the growth of rural churches has been more rapid within the past ten years than in any previous decade, and more rapid than the growth of the Church as a whole in China. The average age of the 73 sample churches is but 32.5 years, which means that the typical rural church began about 1905. At that time the total number of Protestant communicants in China was 178,251.⁶ Since then the number has increased nearly fourfold.

(261) *History under Lay Leadership.* Nineteen churches (26 per cent) reported on lay leadership without a resident preacher during all or part of their history. Twelve of these are now in some kind of a circuit under supervision of travelling pastors or itinerant missionaries and evangelists; two of these have changed recently from resident preacher to circuit plan. Two churches are under lay leadership with help from teachers and students of near-by institutions, two are receiving volunteer help from preachers not now on salary. Two churches are led by elders with very little

⁶ MacGillivray, Donald, *A Century of Protestant Missions in China*, p. 668.

direction from outside. Two churches were under lay leaders until recently and have now developed to the point where they have resident pastors.

(262) *Chief Emphases in History of the Church's Work.* Surveyors were asked to indicate what had been the chief emphases through the history of the work of the church, by checking twice or once a prepared list in the Survey Schedule. This information or these impressions were secured from local pastors and church workers and from missionaries or district superintendents who have been serving in this church area.

TABLE X. EMPHASES IN WORK OF THE RURAL CHURCH
IN THE PAST. 73 SAMPLE RURAL CHURCHES

<i>Type of Work</i>	<i>Percentage of Churches in which —this work has been given—</i>		
	<i>Chief emphasis</i>	<i>Some emphasis</i>	<i>No emphasis</i>
Preaching to non-Christians	57.1	41.5	1.4
Preaching to Christians	49.3	47.9	2.8
Personal evangelism	35.6	56.2	8.2
Pastoral visitation	47.9	47.9	4.2
Evangelistic campaigns	9.6	71.2	19.2
Medical work	11.0	32.8	56.2
Christian influence on society	15.1	56.2	28.7
Opposition to social evils	21.9	50.7	27.4
Helping members in difficulties	30.1	57.6	12.3
Social service	15.1	49.3	35.6
Worship services	47.9	43.8	8.3
Family prayer meetings	30.1	63.0	6.9
Distribution of Christian literature	11.0	54.8	34.2
Revivals	11.0	60.2	28.8
Training of church members	30.1	58.9	11.0
Training of lay workers	15.1	54.8	30.1

Preaching in its various forms, both to Christians and non-Christians, has been stressed, but especially evangelistic preaching. In certain areas and at certain times this has taken the form of revival meetings, but evangelistic campaigns and revivals have not loomed large among these churches as a whole. Family prayer meetings and the training of members have received considerable

emphasis, more so than the training of lay workers. Social service is a recent emphasis as several churches indicated, although several marked their primary schools as a beginning of service to the community at large. Others mention famine relief. Individual service, the helping of individual members in difficulties has been more common. Distribution of literature probably has been limited largely to tracts, catechisms and gospels and this has not received chief emphasis because of illiteracy in the country. Medical work has been little emphasized. The mission hospitals have drawn patients from these rural communities but have not contributed directly to rural medical service through the churches, nor have they been able to aid in the building up of a large number of these rural churches.

(263) *Written History of the Church.* When Professor Schermerhorn of Garrett Institute visited China a few years ago, he remarked to a group of missionaries in Nanking including the writer, that the history of local churches in China would be invaluable material for the future church historian. However, few of the churches studied are keeping careful records. Four sent a printed history and seven sent well-written accounts of the development of the church from the beginning, in Chinese. Two churches sent copies of their session records. Two surveyors replied that material was available in Conference Minutes and other records, but that it "lacks working up." This is no doubt true of many churches. The Polihsiang Church (Church No. 23) has a detailed history of its development written on the inside walls of the church building.

(264) *Events of Special Interest in the History of the Church.* The answers to this question show that abundant data for local church histories are available from the memories of missionary and Chinese church workers and of church members. The events of special interest which they describe and their informal comments on the history of the church read like the Acts of the Apostles and the stories of the early churches. Twenty-five of the surveys tell of severe troubles and persecutions at some time in the history of the church and of faithfulness and courage on the part of Christians. Two describe the way in which recovery was made after disaster. The history of one church (Church No. 71) is a story of continuous opposition and trials—attack by Roman Catholics, burning of the church, destruction of the new building by a heavy storm, com-

munist and bandit disturbances and killing of Christians. And yet this church has grown from twenty to forty-seven members in the last five years. Four churches tell of the falling-away of numbers of members at times of trouble. Six report alternating periods of growth and decline, eight tell of recent encouragements. Other features or incidents mentioned are: the influence of special revivals at certain periods (6 churches), the earnestness of certain members (4), abuses within the church at various times (4), the winning of whole villages to Christianity (3), social reforms which the church has promoted (3), a serious split within the church at one time (1), great influence of one pastor's wife upon the community (1), trouble with proselyting groups (1). The story of the growth and struggles of rural churches in China during the past few decades is a very human one, and yet it reveals the working of the Divine Spirit in the lives of simple men and women and in the lives of new Christian fellowships.

II. MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

1. *Maps of Church Membership*

(267) Each church was asked to furnish a map of the distribution of members of the church now living within the parish. "Mark important villages and all villages where there are church members with a black dot and write the name of the village by the dot in small characters. Mark a red dot by the village for each family in which there is a church member or members and by the red dot the number of members of the family who are church members. Do not include inquirers. Use larger sheet if necessary."

Seventy surveyors sent parish maps. The writer has marked sixteen of these as excellent, thirty-three as fair to good and twenty-one as poor. Parish maps showing location of villages around the parish center and distribution of Christians in the villages are of great value to the investigator of rural church conditions; they also show how well the church knows its own field of work.

Some maps indicate that the church is extending its influence in all directions; others that only certain sections or villages are being reached. Samples of maps of different types of parishes are reproduced in the Appendix.

2. *Survey of Church Membership as a Whole.*

What kind of membership do these representative sample churches have? What classes of farmers are they reaching, what is the proportion of men and women, what is the ratio of church membership to the population, how do literacy standards compare with the non-Christian population, what has been the rate of growth in recent years? These and other questions are answered by the data which are summarized below. Seventy-one churches furnished complete or partial information.

(263) *Number of Members and Sex Distribution.* Sixty-eight churches report a total active resident membership of 8,039, a mean average of 118.2 members per church. The range of membership is from 16 to 650 (Church No. 21, a large parish covering nearly a third of a *hsien* with five branch churches). The median average membership is 83. Seventeen churches (23.3 per cent) have less than 50 members, twenty-seven have between 50 and 100 members (37.0 per cent), thirteen between 100 and 200 members (17.8 per cent), ten between 200 and 400 members (13.7 per cent), and one over 600 members (1.4 per cent). The detailed percentage distribution according to size of membership follows:

TABLE XI. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF
68 SAMPLE RURAL CHURCHES BY SIZE OF
ACTIVE-RESIDENT MEMBERSHIP

<i>Number of Members</i>	<i>Number of churches</i>	<i>Percentage of all 73 churches</i>
10—19	2	2.8
20—29	4	5.5
30—39	4	5.5
40—49	7	9.6
50—59	9	12.3
60—69	1	1.4
70—79	6	8.2
80—89	7	9.6
90—100	4	5.5
101—149	8	11.0
150—199	5	6.8
200—299	5	6.8
300—399	5	6.8
Over 600	1	1.4
Not reporting	5	6.8
	73	100.0

The median average of membership in these churches is considerably higher than W. A. Anderson's estimate of forty-five to fifty for typical rural churches. The average membership in all organized congregations in China, urban and rural, is 70.4¹. Some rural churches, because of their large area, and number of branch churches, tend to have larger membership, and these must be included in a study of the whole situation. Six-tenths of the sample churches in this survey have a membership of less than one hundred.

Forty-four churches give statistics of non-resident membership, ranging from 1 to 80. The mean average is 16.8 and median average 8.

Seventy churches report a total active membership, resident and non-resident, of 9,410, with a mean average per church of 134.4.

Sixty-six churches furnished data on men and women members: a total of 4,744 men and 3,095 women who are active resident members. This means that 60.5 per cent are men and 39.5 per cent are women. The average of men is about 6 per cent higher in these sample churches than in the East China Distribution Survey.² It is also considerably higher than Anderson's estimate, 194 males to 100 females.³ The 1922 Survey reported that men communicants were 63 per cent of the total membership.⁴ From our studies it seems evident that the proportion of women members has been increasing. Seventeen rural churches (23.3 per cent) actually report a larger number of women than of men members. In the United States the proportion of men and women in all the churches is 44 and 56 per cent respectively, with women predominating.⁵

(269) *Inactive List*. Many churches keep a list of inactive members, who have left the community or who no longer attend church, but whose names are still on the roll. Forty-eight churches report such lists, with an average number of 41.7 names on each list. Of all the names, 60.5 per cent are men and 39.5 per cent women, the same proportion as in the active membership.

(270) *Size of Church Families*. Sixty-three churches reported the number of families in the parish with at least one active church

¹ *The 1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China*, p. xi. The most recent denominational statistics show a total of 7,281 organized congregations and 512,873 communicant members.

² See Survey I in this volume.

³ *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact-Finder's Reports*, V. Part II.

⁴ *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. 297.

⁵ Fry, C. L., *The U. S. Looks at Its Churches*, p. 120.

member. In a few cases non-resident families were included. The significant relationship here is the ratio between total membership and number of church families. For example, if a church has 75 members and 50 member families the ratio of Christians per family would be 1.5. The mean average of all ratios is found to be 1.97, and median 1.8, the range being from 1.2 to 4.1 (Church No. 23). The latter is a church with a history of over fifty years in a small village and a limited parish area. Sixty-three per cent of the churches reporting average between one and two members to a church family. W. A. Anderson reports a sample study of 937 rural families involving 1,732 Christians, an average of one and eight-tenths Christians per family. In another study of 606 families in four areas, it was found that 44 per cent of the members of families were Christian. In other samples, he found that when all families consisting of only one person were eliminated, there was a very significant percentage of families with only one Christian.⁶ In a parish where the church is winning whole families to a large extent, the average ratio should be 2.5 or above, in the opinion of the writer. Children under sixteen are not included in determining this ratio.

(271-272) *Christian Villages*. Sixty-four churches reported or mapped the number of villages in which members live. The mean average is 20.2, showing a fairly wide and scattered distribution. Since the average number of villages per parish in this study is 116, it seems that the churches have members in about a fifth of the villages of their areas at work. If a few of the larger parishes are omitted the ratio is higher, with Christians living in about one-third of the villages in the church area. However, the number of church members per village is very low, the average being only 7.6. Since the average village in the 73 communities surveyed has a population of 329 this means that the Christian influence upon one village is usually very weak. As a matter of fact the distribution of members is not even, and the maps show that twenty or more members in one village is not uncommon. Twenty-one parishes reported "Christian villages," villages having a large number of Christians or deeply influenced by Christianity. The largest number reported in one parish is four, the average for the churches reporting such villages being 1.7 and the average for all the churches studied being .5.

⁶ *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact-Finder's Reports*, V, Part II, p. 200.

(273) *Ratio of Church Membership to Total Population of Parish.* Taking the total population of the parishes studied and dividing by the total number of communicant members reported we find that there is one individual Christian to 244 persons. Stated in another way, there are 41 Christians per 10,000 population in these parish areas. This is a higher proportion, of course, than in China as a whole or in any one province as a whole because there are many rural communities without churches. The 1922 Survey Volume reported about 7.8 communicants per 10,000 population.⁷ The highest proportion was in the provinces of Fukien, 22.6 per 10,000 and in Kwangtung, 17.4 per 10,000. In 1937 there were about 12 Christians per 10,000 population in all China.

In thirty-seven of the churches studied, just one-half, the proportion of church members is 50 or higher per 10,000 population. This means one Christian to 200 or less persons. In six parishes (Churches Nos. 23, 26, 36, 39, 61, 66) the proportion is one Christian to 38, 37, 65, 10, 43 and 54 persons respectively. What factors have brought about a larger proportion of Christians in these rural communities? One factor is the age of the church, the average being 31 years. Another reason is the fact that all of these six churches work intensively in small areas, four under 10 *li* radius; the other two in parishes of 13 and 25 *li* radius where the population is comparatively small. There are no doubt other factors, such as leadership, and influence upon certain important families or clans in the communities.

On the other hand the five parishes which have less than 10 communicants per 10,000 are all in large areas or in areas where the population is very dense.

Two conclusions seem justified. The ratio of Christians to the population is much higher in rural communities where churches are located; and where there has been a longer history of work with more intensive effort.

(274) *Distance of Members from Church Center.* We find considerable variations between parishes: in some parishes most of the members live near the church center, in others few have been reached near the church but members live in more distant villages. The data from 65 churches are analyzed in Table XII.

⁷ *The Christian Occupation of China*, p. 298.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

TABLE XII. DISTANCE OF MEMBERS FROM CHURCH
CENTER IN 65 SAMPLE RURAL CHURCHES

<i>Distance from church center</i>	<i>Percentage of members whose homes are within this zone</i>
Within 1 <i>li</i> ^a	27.0
1 to 5 <i>li</i>	25.4
6 to 10 <i>li</i>	16.1
11 to 15 <i>li</i>	10.0
16 to 25 <i>li</i>	10.0
More than 25 <i>li</i>	11.2

(a) A *li* is about one-third of an English mile.

More than half the members of these sample churches live within 5 *li* of the church. The rather high percentage of those living beyond 25 *li* is due, in part, to one large parish which extends over nearly half a *hsien*.

(275) *Chief Occupations of Church Members.* Churches were asked to classify their membership by chief occupations, following a list given in the Survey Schedule. Table XIII gives an analysis of the data furnished by 59 churches.

The percentages can be only approximate since some persons may be classified in two ways. For example the percentage of mothers and girls is less than half the proportion of woman members in the average rural church; this is because many churches reported them under farmers. Farmers and their families account for at least 65 per cent of the total. In many churches the proportion of farming families is above 80 per cent. The farmers who have become Christians are chiefly owners and part-owners; there is a much smaller percentage of tenants than in China as a whole. Some tenants may have been classed as part-owners but it is probably true that the tenant class is not being reached as effectively as the better class farmers. Very few landlords have become Christians. The proportion of gentry who have been considered most influential men in the community is surprisingly small, but there are many obstacles in the way of such persons becoming Christians although they may be friendly to the church. Teachers and pupils account for one-tenth of the membership; this is due largely to the primary schools connected with about half of the churches. Most of the churches

TABLE XIII. OCCUPATIONS OF CHURCH MEMBERS
IN 59 SAMPLE RURAL CHURCHES

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number of churches reporting this occupation</i>	<i>Average number members per church reporting</i>	<i>Percentage of total membership (59 churches) engaged in this occupation</i>
Non-farming landowners	16	3.7	.8
Farmers—owners	53	46.5	32.8
Farmers—part-owners	43	24.8	14.2
Farmers—tenants	28	9.7	3.6
Merchants and tradesmen	52	8.5	5.9
Artisans and craftsmen	30	5.1	2.0
Non-farming labor	22	3.8	1.1
Officials, political class	17	2.8	.6
Gentry	14	3.0	.6
Transport business	11	11.0	.2
Sick, unable to work	14	2.6	.5
Innkeepers	12	2.0	.2
Apprentices	18	7.8	1.9
Teachers	41	7.7	4.1
Pupils	43	9.6	5.5
Military	15	1.7	.3
Leisure class	7	1.1	.3
Unemployed	18	2.8	.7
Home work, mothers	48	23.1	14.8
Unmarried girls in homes	29	7.3	2.8
Aged, no work	39	6.9	3.6
Others—doctors, nurses, social workers, other occupations	28	8.3	3.6

report some merchant members in the market center. Other classes have been won in small numbers only to the church.

(276) *Proportion of Immigrants in Church Membership.* One-half of fifty-four churches report immigrant members in the church, an average number of 7.9 per church. But the immigrants account for only 5.4 per cent of the total number of members. An immigrant was defined as one of a family whose oldest member had moved into this community from another community. It may be that some churches considered members as natives if they had lived for several years in the community. Seven churches report a

considerable number of immigrant families in the church. The case studies seem to indicate that the church membership is largely native stock. W. A. Anderson describes several regions where the church has been more successful in reaching immigrant than native families. "The inter-communal and inter-provincial type of migration, upon which there are no studies, seems to be a major form of mobility. Finding it hard to make a living in their native place, young men, especially, venture forth to other areas. . . . They establish themselves, bring in members of their families, and settle down. Then they seek social attachments. The church offers social ties, and it may be that the Christian church is being builded out of these groups. . . . Sufficient evidence was not obtained to state positively that the rural church in China is composed of persons who are socially detached, chiefly migrant farmers and shopkeepers, but the hypothesis may be presented that the church is serving to a significant degree this element, and that it has not been able to break through the clan and family organization and win whole families."⁸ The latter statement is certainly true in some sections but the case studies do not seem to indicate the large proportion of migrant population in the rural church as a whole that Anderson suggests. However, in the Shunhwachen experimental parish of the Nanking Theological Seminary (Church No. 30) where a very careful study has been made of migration from other regions, and of the composition of church membership, 64 per cent of the members are in families who have moved into the community within the past thirty years.

(277) *Age Distribution of Church Members.* Fifty-seven churches furnished an analysis of their membership by age groups. This was not so difficult as it might seem since ages of persons are generally known in China and the church membership record usually has the age of the member when he joined the church. Table XIV shows the percentages in the total membership of these sample churches.

How does this age distribution compare with that in the rural population of China as a whole? Eliminating those under 15 from both this table and Buck's tables of age distribution in rural China, for sake of comparison, we find that the church is enrolling a much smaller proportion of the age group between 20 and 40, especially

⁸ *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact-Finder's Reports*, V, Part II, 199-201.

of youth in the twenties. In the general rural population 26 per cent (age 15 and above) are between 21 and 30, while in the churches studied only 18 per cent are in this age group. Between 15 and 20 the percentages are closer together but the proportion of girls is much lower in the church. This is probably due to the fact that many of these girls are preparing for marriage or beginning their homes and men pastors cannot reach this group easily. The percentage of members in the age groups above 40 is slightly higher than in the general population. About 11 per cent of the church membership above 16 years of age is sixty years old or more with men and women about equal in number. The rural church in China, as a whole, has appealed more to the older than to the younger people. A large proportion of youth are represented among inquirers and new members now coming into the churches, as a later table will show.

TABLE XIV. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CHURCH MEMBERS
IN 57 SAMPLE RURAL CHURCHES

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Percentage of total membership in age group</i>		
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men and Women</i>
Under 15	4.3	2.7	6.0
15—20	13.2	3.9	17.1
21—30	10.2	6.5	16.7
31—40	10.7	8.2	18.9
41—50	10.4	6.5	16.9
51—60	7.8	5.5	13.3
Over 60	5.6	4.5	10.1

(278) *Economic Status of Church Members.* The great majority of members are from the middle and lower economic groups in the villages. From the reports of 61 churches we find that 30.3 per cent of all the families represented in the membership have incomes of 200 to 500 *yuan* per year. This includes farm produce which the family eats. Buck's average income for the farm family in China is 376 *yuan* (U.S. \$199).⁹ A larger number, 45.3 per cent, were estimated to have a total annual income of less than 200 *yuan* per year. Only 11.2 per cent have incomes of above 500 *yuan* per year and merchants and other non-farmers in the church probably account for many of these. Fifty-four churches report at least one

⁹ See Part I, III, 6, pp. 70-74.

member from this higher income class, with an average of nine members per church. The surveyors marked 12 per cent of the families in these churches as "income unknown."

(279) *Proportion of Second Generation Christians.* To what extent are rural churches composed of second and third generation Christians? Since some churches are over fifty years old and the average age is more than thirty, and since the family is so important a unit in Chinese social life it is to be expected that the number of children and grandchildren growing up as Christians would increase. The proportion in the total church membership of fifty-seven churches is as follows:

	<i>Percentage</i>
First generation Christians	59.1
Second generation Christians	27.7
Third generation Christians	11.2
Fourth generation Christians	2.0

(280) *Educational Status of Church Members.* Churches were asked to grade their members according to three levels of literacy. In some instances the pastors or preachers evidently had a very clear knowledge of the reading abilities of every member; others furnished only estimates, which may be taken as fairly accurate.

Reports from 63 churches show the following distribution of literacy levels:

<i>Literacy level</i>	<i>Percentage of total membership in 63 churches</i>			
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men and Women</i>	<i>Total</i>
Able to read Gospels	33.6	11.7	4.9	50.2
Unable to read Gospels, but able to read very simple literature	11.8	6.2	3.6	21.6
Unable to read at all	8.9	14.7	4.6	28.2

One-half of the membership is able to read the Gospels and hence most of the New Testament. Twice as many men can read as women. A comparison with studies of literacy among the rural population in general¹⁰ indicates that the proportion of men in the rural church who can read is somewhat higher and the proportion of women much higher than among non-Christians. This is due to the emphasis upon learning to read catechisms and the Bible in

¹⁰ See Part I, III, 11.

many churches and more recently to literacy classes promoted by the church. However there are wide variations among the churches, according to denomination, region, local leadership and program, from 20 per cent to 80 per cent of literacy being reported.

Dr. Carleton Lacy, Secretary of the American Bible Society in China, found in an intensive study of a group of churches in the Hinghwa Methodist Conference, Fukien, that 2,086 members could read the New Testament and 1,241 could not, the percentage being 63 per cent and 37 per cent respectively.¹¹ However this study included both urban and rural members and in many sections of Fukien the Romanized Bible which can be more easily taught, especially to women, is in wide use.

A more carefully graded literacy test has been tried in the experimental parish of Nanking Theological Seminary (Church No. 30) and in a few other churches. The Rural Church Department is still experimenting with these tests. The test sheet includes six passages for reading, graded in difficulty, and space for noting the number of characters recognized or missed and questions answered satisfactorily on the reading material. The results of the tests in the Shunhwachen parish of fifty Christians (1933) are here given:

- 0 indicates absolute illiteracy, no characters or very few recognized.
1. indicates ability to read Test One; reading knowledge of about 250 Chinese characters or first reader of "Farmer's Thousand Character Texts."
2. indicates ability to read Test Two, reading knowledge of about 500 characters; literacy level of two readers of "Farmer's Thousand Character Texts."
3. indicates ability to read Test Three, reading knowledge of about 1,000 characters or all four readers of "Farmer's Thousand Character Texts."
4. indicates ability to read selected passages from the Gospels; reading knowledge of over 1,000 characters including some Christian terms.
5. indicates ability to read selected passages from the Epistles; reading knowledge of about 2,000 characters and familiarity with New Testament language.
6. indicates ability to read general religious literature, reading knowledge of about 3,000 characters.

¹¹Information given by Dr. Carleton Lacy to writer.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Number of men	4	4	2	4		5	9	28
Number of women	7	6		3		1	5	22

Absolute illiteracy is 14 per cent among the men of this group and 31 per cent among the women. The illiterates are mostly older church members, those who live at a greater distance from the church and some recent church members. The number who did not have sufficient knowledge of the character to read the New Testament was 23 or nearly one-half. It was found at Shunhwachen that those who could read the New Testament at all could read the more difficult passage in Test Five.

Although a larger proportion of rural Christians are literate than non-Christians, yet much remains to be done in education to read so that all members can use their own Bible and hymn books. Methods of teaching reading are discussed in a later section.

A little over 42 per cent of the members in 63 churches own Bibles or Testaments. The figures are: men, 26.6 per cent, women, 13.8 per cent, men and women, 1.8 per cent, total 42.2 per cent.

(281) *Regularity of Church Attendance.* Fifty-five churches reported on regularity of church attendance among members. An average of 74.6 attend worship and preaching services at least twice a month, an average of 27.8 attend at least once a month, and an average of 30.2 attend irregularly or infrequently. This makes a total of 132.6, a little larger than the average resident church membership of 118 for 68 churches (see question 268). The percentages in these three groups are 56.3, 21.0 and 22.7 respectively. Some non-resident members and perhaps inquirers may be included.

The average number of Sundays per year on which each member is estimated to attend church is 28.9, most of the estimates being between twenty and forty. Twelve out of 51 churches keep regular attendance records. W. A. Anderson made a study of 1,030 Christians in four areas and reported 40 per cent as regular attendants at church. "An average attendance of sixty for every hundred members appears to be a good attendance."¹²

(282) *Number of Influential Men in the Rural Churches.* The churches were asked how many "outstanding men of the community" or men and women of strong influence are Christians.

¹² *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact-Finder's Reports*, V, Part II, 201-202.

Forty-five churches report such members, the numbers ranging from 1 to 35 with an average of 8.3 per church. Different criteria of judgment were probably applied so too much weight cannot be given these answers. They do show that the rural church is winning some men of leadership in the community. One surveyor mentioned two outstanding village heads, another two strong merchants. Others added notes on the difficulties of winning heads of clans and members of the gentry class. One quoted I Corinthians 1:26, "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called." Only one church (Church No. 23), a very large parish in north China, reported any members of secret societies who were in the church. Some surveyors said that as far as they could find out there were none.

(283) *Impression of Membership as a Whole.* Surveyors were asked to secure through the local pastor and other church leaders an impression of the membership as a whole. Fifty-nine churches furnished this information. The percentages in the total membership of these church areas follow:

	<i>Percentage of total membership in 59 rural churches</i>
Very active and earnest members	26.9
Fairly active and earnest members	45.4
Indifferent and cold members	24.5
Members who are a serious hindrance to the influence of church	3.2

These rural churches face the same problems of differences in earnestness and activeness among members which local churches everywhere face.

(284) *Children in Christian Families.* Fifty churches furnished data on this question, reporting a total of 3,883 children (ages 16 and under) in families which have at least one Christian. The average is 77.7 for these churches, which is about six-tenths of the average membership of all the rural churches studied. In the Shunhwachen church (Church No. 30) where a detailed list of church children has been made, with ages, it was found that the average number of those under 16 was about 1.1 per church family, and over 16 was .8 per family. The proportion of boys and girls in the 50 churches is: boys, 48 per cent, girls, 44 per cent, sex not dis-

tinguished, 8 per cent. These young children of the church, about one to every family represented, are an important field for Christian training and an important potential force in the life of the church.

(285-287) *Statistics of Church Membership for the Previous Five-Year Period* (1932-1936). Annual statistics of church membership and growth over a period of time are more difficult to secure. Several surveyors said that the church studied had no such records. In some cases records had been lost in local disturbances, in other cases local statistics could not be separated from those of the district or circuit as a whole or local records were not clear. Only 58 churches were able to furnish the desired statistics for the previous five-year period in whole or in part. About one-third of the records are very clear and commendably accurate.

TABLE XV. CHURCH STATISTICS FOR PREVIOUS
FIVE-YEAR PERIOD (1932-1936)

	<i>Number churches reporting</i>	<i>Total number persons reported</i>	<i>Average number per church reporting</i>
Baptized or admitted on confession	52	2637	50.7
Transferred from other churches:			
from own denomination	16	76	4.7
from other denominations	10	51	5.1
New members received from Christian families	50	1037	20.1
New members received from non-Christian families	48	1218	25.4
Disciplined, name removed from roll	15	65	4.6
Readmitted to membership	7	20	2.9
Moved away, names still on roll	24	154	6.4
Moved to cities	23	108	4.7
Died	40	361	9.0
Backsliding, become cold	22	545	24.7
Members lost to Communists	1	"few"	
Members killed by Communists, bandits or persecutors	5	80	18.0
Lost to proselyting groups	12	83	6.9
Net gain in church membership, five-year period	25	1064	42.6

Figures asked for were from 1932 to 1936. Table XV gives a summary of the data secured. Mean averages are for the churches answering each question, not for all the churches in the survey.

Other more detailed analyses could be made of some of the data, since a number of churches reported statistics for each year in the five-year period. Although information is not complete for all the churches in the survey enough is at hand to justify certain general conclusions. Rural churches on the whole have had a fairly rapid growth since 1932, with a net gain of about 30 per cent. The rate of growth per year is about five times as great as in the general rural population. Most of the new members have been received by baptism or confession of faith, less than one-fifth by transfer or letter from other churches. New members coming from Christian families, families with at least one member Christian, are fewer than those coming from non-Christian families. Only a small number of churches have exercised their powers of discipline or excommunication in case of unworthy or cold members, and very few record readmissions to membership. Death and moving to other communities or to cities account for some losses, but the greatest loss is through members backsliding or becoming cold. Only one church reports members having joined the communists, but five churches in regions which have been seriously disturbed give figures of members killed by communists and bandits. Twelve churches, about one-sixth of the total number, report members lost to small sects and proselyting groups. The net gain in membership of 25 rural churches¹³ is much larger than that in the Protestant churches as a whole during the same period, which the writer estimates at about 10 per cent.¹⁴ Granted that these sample rural churches may be selected churches, yet the evidence is clear that average good or above average rural churches are growing faster in membership than city churches.

Forty-seven churches say that they keep records of membership, 7 that they do not; 53 out of 54 churches say that they report records annually to some regional or central organization of their church body. However, the records vary greatly in detail and in clearness.

(287) *Reasons for Rapid or Slow Growth.* The churches were asked to give reasons for any very slow or very rapid growth during the past five years. The answers are exceedingly interesting. Churches which are enjoying a steady or fairly rapid growth furnish

¹³ Churches 4, 9, 10, 13, 15, 18, 19, 23, 26, 29, 30, 34, 35, 42, 44, 45, 46, 48, 51, 52, 55, 60, 61, 71, 73.

¹⁴ See statistics in 1936 *Handbook of the Christian Movement in China*, p. ix.

the following explanations: good leadership or new pastor (9 churches), community service (6), peace after disturbances (5), revival meetings (4), personal evangelism or service of earnest members (4), influence of Oxford groups (1), active lay-workers (1), ingathering after famine years (1), result of friendly service of church (1), help of near-by institution (1), religious education program (1), special work with children (1), healings through prayer (1), better supervision (1), mass movement of villages into the church (1). The latter phenomenon, of which there is one example among the 73 sample churches (Church No. 69) is described more fully in a later section.

Churches reporting a static condition or very slow growth give as reasons: political unrest (3), poor leadership (2), raising standard of admission (2), clearing of rolls (1), members leaving the community (1), decline of primary school connected with church (1), suspicion of church in the community (1), indifference of the people to Christianity (1), bad character of some church members (1); persecutions by non-Christian relatives (1).

3. *Survey of Inquirers and Catechumens*

(290) Definition. The definition of "inquirer" or "catechumen" varies in different church groups. Some churches consider any one who has attended church services a few times an inquirer, others expect a period of study and definite commitment before a person is enrolled.

Churches were asked to state their standards for admission to the inquirer, catechumen or probationer list. Fifty-nine replied, some giving more than one standard. The answers are classified below:

Frequent church attendance for definite period of time	21
Study of Christian essentials—such as catechism, Commandments, hymns, Bible, for a time, an evidence of some understanding	15
Earnest desire to study Christian truth	14
Willingness to signify purpose openly or enroll name	10
Putting away idols and superstitions	7
Evidence of repentance and second birth	5
Belief in Christianity	5
Introduction by some Christian friend	5
Evidence of good character	5
Proper occupation	1
Application for examination by church session	1

(291) *Number of Inquirers in Churches Surveyed.* With these varying definitions of the term inquirer or catechumen in mind we come to a study of the data furnished by 65 out of the 73 sample churches.

The total number of inquirers reported by 67 churches is 5,165 which is 64.2 per cent of the total church membership reported. In other words, there are about six inquirers to every ten members. The average per church is 79.5, the numbers ranging from 4 to 450. The median is 36. Of the total number 57.5 per cent are men, 45.6 per cent are women and sexes are not differentiated among 6.9 per cent. The proportion of women is slightly higher than among church members, showing that the rural church is increasingly influencing women.

(292-299) *Other Data on Inquirers.* Classified according to distance from the church center, the inquirers fall into the following groups:

<i>Distance from church</i>	<i>Percentage of total number in this zone</i>
Within 5 li	48.7
6 to 10 li	23.9
11 to 15 li	11.2
16 to 25 li	13.1
Over 25 li	3.1

Comparing this table with the distance distribution of church members (Question 274) we find that the spread of members is smaller. The new Christians are coming from a more limited area, three-fourths of them from within 15 li or 5 miles.

The average number of villages represented by inquirers in each parish is 16.0, a little smaller than the average number (20.2) where Christians reside.

No list of occupations was furnished to check as in the case of church members but the answers indicate that farmers and their families are in the large majority. Farmers are mentioned by 42 churches, merchants and tradesmen by 19, non-farming laborers by 14, pupils by 13, teachers by 4, professional and social workers by 4, and women specifically by 3.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

The age distribution (51 churches reporting) is as follows:

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Percentage of all inquirers (51 churches)</i>
Under 15	10.6
16—20	19.5
21—30	25.3
31—40	18.6
41—50	12.5
51—60	7.5
Over 60	6.0

This table may be compared with the age distribution of church members (Question 277). The larger proportion of children under 15 is explained by the fact that many children of Christian families and pupils in primary schools of the church are counted as inquirers. But the most significant fact is that a much larger percentage of inquirers than of church members are in the younger age groups. Forty per cent of the church members are under 30 years of age and 55 per cent of the inquirers. This is a very encouraging trend. The proportion of inquirers above 30 is consequently smaller, and nearer to the proportion of these age groups in the general population.

Among the inquirers 95.2 per cent are reported to be members of native families and 4.8 per cent immigrants, about the same proportion as reported among church members.

The proportion of literate and illiterate inquirers (55 churches reporting) is as follows:

	<i>Percentage of all inquirers</i>			
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men-Women</i>	<i>Total</i>
Able to read the gospels	26.4	10.0	3.0	39.4
Unable to read the gospels	23.5	23.5	13.6	60.6

The number who are literate is naturally greater among church members than inquirers because they have received more training. The percentage of illiteracy among inquirers is near to that in the general population and shows the needs of training to read among those preparing for church membership, not waiting until they have joined the church.

In 54 churches reporting, 38.2 per cent of the inquirers came from families in which there are already Christians, and 61.8 from non-Christian families. This is a larger proportion from non-Christian families than those who have been admitted to church membership during the past five years (see Question 285) and seems to indicate that the church is reaching out more now to non-Christian homes and villages.

5. *Study of Church Constituency*

An effort was made to find out the size of the church constituency, members of the community in addition to Christians and inquirers who are receiving some Christian instruction or are friendly to the church and may become inquirers in time.

(300) Thirty-three churches estimated the number of persons not members or inquirers, receiving regular Christian instruction. The total number is 3,274, an average of 30 men, 17 women and 42 children for the churches reporting. The larger number of children is due to inclusion of primary school pupils. Of the total number 22.7 per cent are said to be from families with at least one Christian.

(301) The churches were asked whether many "hangers-on," or persons wanting to be Christians for mere material benefits ("rice Christians") are found, and whether they constitute a serious problem. Eighteen churches replied that such persons are found; eight said a few, four made estimates of ten or more persons, and one survey says that the majority of persons connected with the church are of such character; one church replies that there are "hangers-on" only in famine years. Ten churches feel this is a serious problem for them, two say the greatest problem; eight churches report that they formerly had this problem but not now. Thirty-six churches say this type of person does not create a problem for them.

(302) Fifty-two churches give estimates, varying from 4 to 1,000, of "other persons in the parish community known by name, friendly and cooperative with the church, who are becoming interested in Christianity, and who, it is hoped, may become inquirers in time." The range is so large that the average number, 127, is not as significant as the fact that some churches are reaching out into the community through all kinds of service and are making innumerable

contacts, while some churches are living largely to themselves, cultivating their own spiritual lives, and touching the large non-Christian population about them chiefly through preaching without making many new acquaintances and friends. Thirty-one of the churches estimated the number of "influential community leaders" among their "friends," the average being about six persons.

(305) "What classes of society in the community are being reached or influenced chiefly by the gospel?" Farmers, as would be expected, lead the list of answers, 49 churches mentioning them specifically. Two say "middle class farmers," one "better class farmers," and one church mentions "small tenant farmers." Other groups mentioned as being reached or influenced are: merchants (17 churches), teachers and pupils (15), non-farming laborers (6), government officials (2), fishermen (1), the poor (1), soldiers (1), social workers (1). Two say that all classes are being reached, but one qualifies with the phrase, "except shopkeepers and wealthy landowners."

"What classes of society are being reached slightly or are not at all influenced?" Business men and merchants head the answers to this question, being mentioned in 24 surveys. Other groups mentioned are: Government and official class (14), teachers and pupils, chiefly of government primary schools (10), military class and police (9), gentry (7), landowners and very wealthy class (5), leisure class and rascals (4), laborers (4), children (1), priests (1), village elders (1), family heads (1), farmers (1). Two churches report that there is no class not influenced to some degree.

Merchants are named in answers to both questions; evidently some churches have been more successful in making friends with and influencing this class in the market centers. The answers show that certain new types of leaders in rural communities—government officials, government school teachers, military men and police, are not being drawn to the church as it is now in any great numbers. While keeping its emphasis upon the farmer and his needs the church must not neglect to make friends with and influence if possible the better educated leaders of community life. Even if they do not become communicant members, their sympathy and friendship may be a great help to the church; and, on the other hand, their suspicion or hostility may put serious obstacles before the church's advance.

III. PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

The data secured under this heading are omitted from this volume, except for answers to three questions.

(320) "What sign is on the outside of the church building?" All temples, large and small, have some name or inscription. Over the entrances of famous monasteries and halls is seen the euphonious name of the building, painted or carved on a board in fine calligraphy. Many shops have specially chosen and beautifully written inscriptions on their signboards. What does the member of the Christian group and the non-Christian passer-by see as he looks at the Christian church in the community? What is its name which becomes familiar to the people? Is the denominational or sectarian aspect of the particular church emphasized?

The answer to the last question is in the negative. Only 17 churches in this survey use a translation of the denominational name that is distinctively different from the names given the Christian church as a whole in China. The name "Church of Christ in China," (a union largely of Presbyterian and Congregational groups) is found on 15 churches, either by itself or in connection with the name of the place. The united body of all Episcopal and Anglican Churches in China has a Chinese name, *Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui*, meaning "China Holy Catholic Church," and this is over the gate of three churches in the survey. Altogether the denominational names, both the more distinctive ones and less distinctive ones such as Church of Christ in China and *Sheng Kung Hui*, are found upon 32 churches.

The simple name, *Fuh In T'ang*, or Gospel Hall, is used outside of 15 churches. It is combined with "Christian Church" in two other cases and with the name of the denomination in six cases. The term "Jesus Hall" or "Christ Hall" is used by twelve churches, and the name of the town where the church is located with the word "Hall" in one case. Two churches have the sign "*Li Pai Tang*" or "Worship Hall," and this title is combined with the name of the denomination in two other churches. One church has the simple sign, "Preaching Place".

An interesting development, more common in the cities, is the use of a special name for the church, with an appealing meaning and sound; e.g., *Shang Ai Tang* or "Hall of Love" (Church No. 53). Five churches report such names on their front walls.

(328) *Equipment Found in the Church.* As this affects considerably the program of worship, religious education and service which the church can carry on at its own center, a summary is given of the reports of surveyors on this question.

Seventy-one of the sample churches answered. Sixty-seven have some kind of raised platform in the church building and 60 some kind of pulpit, often just a table. An altar of some form is found in 26 churches, and a cross in 24. Crosses are on the outside of 13 churches. This symbol would probably be used more on church buildings but for the fact that many church workers feel it is associated with Roman Catholic churches.

Bible pictures decorate the interior walls of 55 churches. Most of these are colored pictures published by the Sunday School Union, Religious Tract Society or evangelistic societies. They vary in quality of reproduction. Some of the better ones are used very effectively for interior decoration. Other kinds of pictures are found in 26 churches—evangelistic pictures, public health posters, New Life Movement pictures and charts, or landscapes. One church reports paintings by local artists used for decoration in the little church building. There is great need for better art decoration within rural churches.

Scrolls, the popular form of interior decoration, are found in 27 churches, and other kinds of inscriptions in 26 churches. Many surveyors made copies of these scrolls and inscriptions which usually are Bible verses or Christian thoughts expressed in literary style and attractively written or painted. Several churches have the Ten Commandments, Beatitudes or Lord's Prayer written on scrolls or on the wall. In the mother church of the Shiherhpah Church (Church No. 65), at Ankuochuang, Chekiang, there is a custom of members giving the church scrolls at Christmas time which serve to brighten the church during the coming year.

In equipment the church building itself is often very bare. Benches with backs are listed in 40 churches, and benches without backs in 43; in 27 churches there are only the latter kind.

Hymns are frequently written on sheets of paper or cloth and hung before the congregation so that all can see and learn while the preacher points; this is reported in 45 churches. Some kind of hymn book is used in 52 churches, most frequently the hymn book promoted by the denomination or in the particular region, and in

several churches books of revival hymns and choruses. However, 17 churches report that they have secured copies of the new Union Hymnal, "Universal Hymns of Praise," and are beginning to use these. A few churches report using T. C. Chao's "Rural Hymns," but only occasionally in regular church services, although these are hymns in rural language and sung to Chinese native tunes. Bibles for use by members are provided in 34 churches. But in nearly all of the churches members are expected to have their own Bibles and hymn books and to bring them to church. Prayer books with responsive prayers and readings are used in ten churches.

Forty-six churches, a surprisingly large number, possess some kind of church bell. Hand bell, hanging bell, old temple bell, Chinese brass bell, American iron bell, are among the types mentioned. Three churches use gongs and one a cymbal to call their members to worship.

Organs are listed by 28 churches, but several are said to be out of condition. A good singing leader with a strong voice can help a congregation to sing better than a wheezy little organ laboriously played and it is a question of how much value an organ is to the average rural church in China. Other musical instruments—band instruments, cornet, accordion, flute, Chinese instruments, are mentioned as being used by 11 churches. There are interesting possibilities in the use of Chinese flutes and other instruments in connection with Christian services.

Oil lamps are used by the great majority of churches for evening meetings or classes, and acetylene or oil pressure lamps which give a brighter light at very little more cost, by 22 churches. Electric lights are found in only three churches, in or near *hsien* cities, which is evidence that these sample churches truly represent rural China. Fifty-seven churches have a blackboard or blackboards and 40 a bulletin board. Some of these boards are outside the church where they are used for posting news, church notices and evangelistic material.

Several small city churches have used the expedient of curtains with rings on wires to separate a small church into classrooms during the Sunday School hour. But only 2 of the rural churches studied have such equipment.

(329) *Equipment for Evangelistic and Social Work.* Equipment for evangelistic and social work is very limited. Twenty churches

list small gramophones, and in eight cases these are loaned for temporary use. The records include Chinese music, band music and Christian hymns sung in Chinese.

Fifty-two churches list portable pictures and charts, which can be carried to the villages. Only 13 churches report games equipment of any kind, usually in connection with primary schools; 15 have medicine chests or first-aid kits; 12 own or can borrow a stereopticon with Bible pictures, health and citizenship slides; 17 report a portable organ and 4 a megaphone for use in speaking to crowds.

Careful studies and experiments need to be made of the kind of equipment an ordinary little rural church needs, the kinds it should own and the kinds that might be loaned to it for temporary use. Further experiments are also needed in the adaptation of Chinese forms of architecture, art, furnishings and music to rural churches.

3. *Branch Church or Mission Chapels.*

(340) Surveyors were asked to list and describe any branch or mission chapels established in connection with the church being studied. Some of the churches are themselves branch churches in a district or circuit; others have helped to found branches which have been linked with another church or have become independent. Yet 39 churches out of 73 report branches in villages where Christian groups meet at times for worship, study and fellowship. The greatest evidence of vitality of a rural church is frequently in the life of these small groups in villages linked to the mother church.

Thirty-nine churches list a total of 110 branches, an average of about three per church reporting and one and a half per church for all the churches in the survey. The distance of these branches from the central church varies from 3 *li* to 50 *li* but most of them are within 18 *li*. A branch beyond 20 *li* tends to become nucleus for a new church in another neighborhood or community. One-half of these branches have been started since 1920; there are very few whose history goes back earlier than 1900.

Twenty-six of the branch groups meet in homes or other buildings loaned by Christians, 17 have small chapels or buildings which have been given by Christians. In 6 cases the mission has rented property, and in 14 cases has bought property. The mission and the local church bought 11 places. Sixteen chapels were built by mem-

bers themselves through contributions of labor, materials and money, and 7 with mission assistance, the average cost being 200 *yuan*.

These branch churches or chapels are usually in charge of a local Christian or committee of Christians. With a few exceptions the equipment is very simple. A Church Missionary Society church in Szechuan (Church No. 60) has five branches within a radius of 50 *li*, each with special church building, pulpit, altar, living rooms and guest rooms, yard and preaching hall, all mission-owned property.

Church No. 35 in Shantung furnishes an interesting and detailed list of twelve branches of which eight are still active, at distances of from 3-31 *li*. Three groups meet in buildings erected by the Christians themselves and 5 in loaned rooms of homes. Members meet for worship and study in their own village chapels and attend the central church on special Sundays. This seems to be the natural way for a church to develop and become rooted in a large community of villages. Yet there are problems in such a dispersion of meeting places, as the survey of this church shows—differences of opinion and disputes within certain village groups and closing of some branches if there is no responsible local leader. A strong pastor is essential to such a system.

Thirty-two churches also report one or more homes which are not branch chapels but where Christian groups meet regularly.

IV. LEADERSHIP, ECCLESIASTICAL ORGANIZATION AND CHURCH POLITY

The denominational or larger church organization to which these rural churches belong and the kind of supervision which they receive is an important question. What is the relation between the local organization and the larger organization and what help does the local group receive in the way of direction and training? Who are the responsible leaders, both regionally and locally?

I. *Denominational Organization and Supervision*

(342) Of the 73 churches in this sample study, 60 are directly related to a Chinese church organization or denominational body in which both Chinese Christian workers and missionaries have part, such as the Church of Christ in China, *Sheng Kung Hui*,

Methodist Episcopal Church. The relation is through a district association, synod, conference or other branch of the larger church body. In this respect the Chinese church is largely following the church systems introduced from the West. The change from the past is in the fact that now most missionaries contribute their services through these Chinese church bodies instead of as individual missionaries or members of mission groups. Only seven churches are directly under mission direction, and three are under joint supervision of mission and Chinese church body. One, an independent Chinese church (Church No. 65) loosely connected with the China Inland Mission, is entirely under Chinese supervision. Two special types of churches, the experimental parishes of Peiping Methodist Theological Seminary and Nanking Theological Seminary receive supervision from both Chinese church organization and the institutions using them as laboratories. Other churches are helped by near-by institutions, but the contribution is largely one of service rather than of supervision.

(343) The majority of churches report that the relation between them and the larger body is "close." Generally this takes the form of supervision, advice, training work and help of various kinds. The larger body makes or approves appointments to preaching and pastoral work. In church bodies which use the circuit system each rural church is linked with other churches in the circuit under a pastor or superintendent. In churches under the Episcopal form of government, the relationship is less with each other than to the person or persons responsible for regional administration and supervision. Where the Congregational system prevails, there is more independence of church groups under some supervision, but often a loose connection between individual churches. Ten churches report that the relation with the higher body is largely limited to financial help and appointments. To the writer it seems that the advantages of the three systems must all be conserved: the strengthening of independence and self-reliance in each local Christian unit of any size; fellowship and mutual help between small groups in a circuit plan; and careful supervision and direction of the program by capable denominational leaders so that individual churches will develop in quality of life as well as in numbers and grow in consciousness of their share in the larger church fellowship.

(344) Missionaries (men and women) lead the list of persons

giving direct supervision or help to the work of these rural churches, being mentioned by 48 churches. Twenty-five mention Chinese pastors as supervisors, sometimes alone, sometimes in cooperation with missionaries; 8 churches mention the chairman of the district or synod organization and 11, executive secretaries; 7 churches report committees giving supervision; 7, Bishops; 6, travelling evangelistic or evangelist teams; 6, district superintendents; 6, women evangelists or religious education workers; and 2, teachers. Frequently more than one person giving supervision or constant help is listed. Missionaries still contribute in large measure to the supervision of rural churches and their point of view and training for this work is of vital importance. Many of the Chinese supervisors are men who are largely occupied with church administrative work or whose chief interest is evangelism; it is a question how many of these are equipped for the difficult task of helping local pastors and preachers or lay-workers to develop a strong program for a church in a community. One survey quoted a local pastor as saying of his supervisor, "I can't see that he has any qualifications for his work." On the other hand some of the churches studied are receiving very good supervision from trained field workers. Good results are clearly seen in the all-round development of the church program.

(344) The qualifications of those responsible for supervision are chiefly a theological education and experience in rural evangelism. A small number have had special training in principles and methods of religious education. A few missionaries have taken special courses in rural work when on furlough or have held rural pastorates for a time in the United States or England. Most of the supervisors have educated themselves in their task. Many would not claim the title of "supervisor" but would say that they were only helping the local churches and keeping them linked with each other in a district or conference program.

(345-346) Missionary and Chinese supervisors make on an average four to six visits to the local church every year, although there are great variations. Places nearer the mission or denominational center are visited more frequently and for shorter periods. Longer visits are made to churches where training classes for the district are held. When a Chinese pastor is responsible for a group of four or more churches he may give several weeks a year altogether to each one. Where the area of work is large and the churches are

many and scattered, each local church or congregation may be visited only once or twice a year. From the rough estimates given it seems that the average church in these case studies receives from 10 to 20 days of supervision or help from outside every year. Sometimes, as in denominations which have "quarterly meetings," the plan of visitation and supervision is quite regular, in other groups there seems to be no definite plan.

The work done by these supervisors on their visits was reported by the surveyors. In order of times mentioned, the different forms of work and activity in which they engage are: preaching and leading meetings, pastoral visitation, administering Holy Communion, teaching classes of members and lay-workers, counselling with local leaders and holding conferences for discussion of work, baptism and confirmation, examination of inquirers, inspection and survey, leading revival services, discussing church business and finance, inspirational, special work for women, planning extension work, directing community service, conducting wedding and funeral services, directing research and experiments.

The area for which one supervisor is responsible varies from a small area of 30 miles radius to several *hsien*, and the number of churches and branch churches in the area varies from 3 to 243. Of course different grades of supervision are reported. But some areas are evidently too large for adequate supervision by the small staff available. A small area, however, does not necessarily mean good supervision unless the denominational or mission organization has a purpose and plan.

(347) The surveyors asked the local leaders whether they considered missionary supervision or assistance still necessary or desirable. Eight churches said "No." Fifty-nine said "Yes." Five added "as adviser and helper rather than in official capacity," three stressed the financial help still needed, four asked for special types of missionary advisers—a rural-minded missionary, for training of lay-workers, for experimental work, for keeping up morale of workers and members.

(348) The church leaders were asked their opinion of the circuit system with no local resident pastor or preacher. All the churches founded by the English Methodists and some other groups use modifications of the system. More disadvantages than advantages were listed. A few mentioned the advantages of independ-

ence, self-support and development of local responsibility. But many spoke of the difficulties of the system; the need for constant pastoral visitation, the lack of trained lay-workers, decline of standard of worship services and whole church program, lack of unity in the work, discouragement of local Christians, impairment of efficiency, lack of aggressive program without a resident preacher, failure of the plan in certain areas. The sentiment among church leaders in this survey is predominantly in favor of resident local preachers with one parish or small group of parishes so that the members of the church and lay-workers may receive adequate direction and the program of the church may develop on wholesome lines. A few typical comments from the surveys may be quoted:

The circuit system is hopeless. A resident preacher and family are essential for growth and power in the church or community. (Church No. 38, Evangelical Mission.)

The advantages of the system are progress in independence and self-support. The disadvantage is that the work does not advance so easily. (Church No. 58, Methodist Church in China.)

This kind of system would be difficult to carry out. Only a resident pastor or preacher with the help of lay-workers would be very effective. (Church No. 55, Methodist Episcopal.)

The work will not advance without a resident preacher. (Church No. 53, Congregational.)

The *Sheng Kung Hui* does not believe the plan is effective. (Church No. 9, Anglican.)

A resident preacher is the best plan, but financial conditions forbid this in all churches. Where there is no resident preacher, the supervising pastor must go often to keep up the interest of the members. (Church No. 61, Methodist Episcopal, South.)

The last comment presents the problem in many areas. Most rural churches cannot provide the entire support of a resident preacher. Churches must be grouped for pastoral supervision or be subsidized. Is it better to have a smaller number of churches with constant pastoral care or a larger number with occasional pastoral care and more dependence upon lay leadership? The one church in this study which has been entirely under lay leadership from the beginning, Church No. 65, has developed since 1911 to a membership of over 300, but under rather unusual circumstances. The rural community has a large proportion of immigrants, the church and the branches from it have been fortunate in the number of outstanding men they have had as "elders," and some very helpful counsel and help has

been given from the outside. The program in this church is of a narrow evangelistic type and the members are subject more than in most churches to the influence of proselyting sects.

The writer believes that "parish circuits" should not be too large and that the ideal to work toward is a resident pastor or trained preacher for every church in a "natural community," with emphasis also upon the training and use of lay-workers both in the central church and its village branches.¹

(349) *"What travelling evangelists or evangelistic teams have visited the church recently?"* Twenty-five churches say that none has come. Twenty churches report special evangelistic speakers or teams from their own denomination who have visited the church. Two churches invited well-known pastors from another denomination to lead special meetings, and four have been visited by evangelistic teams from schools. Twelve have been visited by professional travelling evangelists and eight by professional evangelistic or revival teams, a total of twenty. This is a significant fact and shows that even the rural church has been influenced to some extent by the indigenous evangelistic and revival movements in China today.

About half of the churches visited by evangelistic groups of their own denomination or other groups considered the results good and a half thought the results were fair. Some churches had their members aroused and inspired, new inquirers were enrolled, and personal evangelism was started. Other churches could see no visible results of such meetings and one declared that it would not ask the evangelistic team to return.

(350) *Visits of Specialists.* Seventeen churches report visits from agricultural specialists to make surveys or to help the church in some community program it is undertaking. Fourteen report

¹The comment by Brunner and Kolb on the circuit system in American rural churches is pertinent at this point. "The church that has a non-resident pastor usually shares the services of its minister with one or more other churches. This clergyman may live in the community of one of the churches he serves, in which case he is classed as a part-time resident for that church or he may live at some central point where he has no church but which is convenient to all the congregations he serves. The disadvantages for the church of this circuit system with its non-resident pastor have often been pointed out, and are now fully admitted by country-church executives." In the U. S. A. the proportion of full-time resident ministers in villages is 43.1 per cent of the total. The number of churches served by each pastor is 1.7 less than in China. Brunner and Kolb add, "An increasing number of pastors seem to be tacitly in revolt against this system. They tend to major on the main point of the circuit in an attempt to develop it into a full-time church." Brunner, E. S. and Kolb, H. H., *Rural Social Trends* (1937), p. 227.

THE CHURCH

visits from doctors, nurses or public health specialists, to give help in special clinics, vaccinations, or a public health program. Five churches have been visited recently by supervisors of cooperative societies, three by government specialists, three by university professors with some special interests, two by specialists in work for women and children, and two by student summer service groups. These figures do not include regular denominational workers. They seem to indicate that the rural church is receiving far less help than it might receive from specialists in various phases of rural life and reconstruction, especially those in Christian colleges and universities and hospitals.

2. *Organization of the Local Church*

(351) The surveyors report that 49 churches in these case studies are fully organized congregations, 8 churches are organized churches in a circuit system, and 16 churches are branches of larger churches.

(352) The responsible leaders of the 73 local churches may be classified as follows:

Resident salaried local pastor, ordained	33
Resident salaried local preacher, unordained	21
Lay-worker in circuit system	7
Lay-worker under supervising pastor resident elsewhere	6
Lay-worker under itinerant evangelists	2
Lay-workers in independent church	1
Local preacher (salaried) under ordained pastor resident elsewhere	1
Local committee under supervising pastor resident elsewhere	1
Teacher-preacher	1
	73

(353) The organization within the church will be discussed in connection with Section 6, (400).

3. *Resident Pastor or Preacher*

The data in this section refer to pastors or preachers who give full time or a considerable portion of their time to the sample rural churches studied. The tables and summaries which follow present a composite picture of the rural pastor and preacher in China today.

(354) *General Information.* Sixty-eight pastors and preachers are included in this study, representing 64 churches; in three large

parishes more than one preacher are included. All of the resident pastors and preachers are included and some of the pastors of circuits or supervising pastors of a group of rural churches, who give several weeks or months a year to the churches studied. Fifty-three are giving full time to their churches and 15 part time. Three are women, one a woman evangelist (called pastor) at the unusual church on an island off the Fukien coast (Church No. 62) and two young women evangelists in charge of another Fukien church (Church No. 17).

Only two of the number report any other occupation not connected with church work; one does considerable farming at his home and another runs a medicine shop to supplement his income.

The ages given of 66 of the number average 42.9, the median age being 44. The youngest is 26 and the oldest 71. Seventy-nine per cent are under 50 years of age. W. A. Anderson's statement, "The selective process is operating to put old men into rural places,"² is not borne out by these facts.

Thirty-four of the pastors or preachers have their native homes in the same community or region in which their church is located and 28 come from the same province. Only three are serving in other provinces than their homes. This is a most significant fact. Because of dialect differences especially in rural communities and the differences in living conditions in various parts of China rural pastors and preachers are drawn largely from the region or province in which they are to serve. The war has brought about some migration of Christian workers to other provinces; how permanently this will affect the work of the rural churches remains to be seen.

The birthplace of 48 preachers (77 per cent) is rural, and the birthplace of 17 (23 per cent) urban, that is a port or *hsien* city or large town. This shows an even larger percentage with rural origin than in the study of theological students in China, where 62 per cent come from market-towns and villages.³ It is evident that leaders for the rural churches must be drawn largely from the country, and the rural churches must be the greatest source of supply for future rural ministers. The man with rural origin has the feel of country life and is willing to endure its hardships more easily than the city-born man.

² *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact-Finder's Reports*, VI, V, Part II, 206.

³ *Education for Service in the Christian Church in China*, p. 60 (1935). These figures are for students going into both urban and rural churches.

The classification by occupation of the father is as follows:

Farmer	33
Merchant, business man	17
Pastor or preacher	4
Physician	2
Laborer	2
Official	1
Military	1
Scholar	1
Carpenter	1
Artist	1

63

More than one-half of the group come from farm families and nearly one-fourth from business families. The study of theological students showed 26.8 per cent from agricultural homes, 19.7 per cent from business homes and 18.0 per cent from the homes of ministers.⁴ The sons of ministers are evidently turning more to city than to rural pastorates. Forty-seven come from Christian families (70 per cent) and 20 (30 per cent) from non-Christian families. The study of theological students in China shows that 78 per cent come from Christian families.⁵

The mean average age at which the pastors and preachers in this study became Christians was 19.4 (16 not answering). A little more than 80 per cent became Christians before the age of 25. Only 5 of the whole number are serving in denominations or church bodies other than the one to which they first belonged. Denominations are largely furnishing and training their rural leadership.

All of the 65 men are married. Of the three women evangelists in charge, one is a widow, and has grown children. The average number of children is very high, 3.5 for all the married men and the widow evangelist. There are 121 sons and 120 daughters. Twenty-seven pastors also report a total of 65 children who have died, an average of 1.0 per family in the group. The number of living children per family ranges from one to nine. Practically all of the children of school age are in primary or middle schools. Four are in college or college graduates. The preachers say they hope to give their children as much education as possible, the best they can afford. Those who have children grown and away from home mentioned the

⁴ *Education for Service in the Christian Church in China*, p. 69.

⁵ *Ibid.*

following vocations entered: nursing (6), teaching (3), business (4), married (4), preaching (3), medicine (2), government service, farmer, artisan, each one.

Naturally the home difficulty or problem most keenly felt is connected with finances. Eleven speak of insufficient income as a serious problem. Eight are concerned how to educate their children. Other problems of the home mentioned are: dependent relatives, debts, home cares, too many children, no sons (all daughters), a wayward son. Ten say that they have no serious home difficulty.

(355) *Training and Experience.* According to the general education which they have received these 68 preachers are classified as follows:

Old style education	6
Primary school graduates	2
Junior Middle School ex-students or graduates	17
Normal school ex-students	4
Normal school graduates	3
Senior Middle School ex-students	10
Senior Middle School graduates	15
College ex-student	1
College graduate	1
Not answering	9
	68

The theological education which they have received is varied.

Bible School ex-students or graduates	23
Theological Seminaries, ex-students or graduates	
Nanking Theological Seminary	8
North China Theological Seminary	6
Foochow Theological Seminary	4
Central China Theological Seminary	3
Peking Methodist Theological Seminary	3
Cheeloo School of Theology	2
Canton U. T. S.	2
University of Shanghai	1
Yenching University School Religion (short course)	1
Lutheran Seminaries	2
Name of school not given	2
	57
No theological education	2
No answer	9
	68

A very small number report having taken refresher courses at theological or Bible schools. Eight have had this privilege since they entered the ministry, two have taken refresher courses arranged by their own denomination, and four have been taking long reading courses. Only two mention enrollment in correspondence courses although these are offered by several seminaries. Evidently the ordinary correspondence course does not help the preacher who has had some theological training and is now in service. One preacher was taking a medical course by correspondence.

One preacher out of the whole group reports a full year of agricultural study at the University of Nanking, in connection with the Rural Church Major Course of Nanking Theological Seminary. Seven have taken short courses or summer school courses in some phase of agriculture or cooperative work. Two are taking a reading course in agriculture. Many of the pastors feel the need of some training in agriculture in order to fit them for better service in rural communities but the usual theological and Bible School curricula include few such courses.

A majority of the preachers have attended various conferences and institutes for preachers in recent years, usually in their own denomination. Some have gone to regional or national conferences and retreats and have greatly benefitted from them. Several mention recent institutes for rural preachers which have dealt especially with the problems and work of the rural church and which seem to be meeting a real need.

The preachers were asked what training had been of most help to them in their present work. Seventeen mentioned their theological or Bible school studies and three especially Bible courses; eight mentioned courses in agriculture and cooperatives. Other answers were scattered: leaders' training courses or institutes (6), rural conferences (3), religious education courses (2), refresher year (3), experience on evangelistic team (3), all previous education (2), and reading courses, middle school courses, revival meetings, public health courses, Oxford Groups, training in community service, each one.

(356) *Experience since Entering Christian Service.* The preachers were questioned as to the chief influences or motives which led them into the Christian ministry. The answers have been grouped as follows: a desire to save others, or to introduce

Christ as Saviour to others (17), some kind of call from God, inner urge or inspiration (15), purpose to serve or reconstruct society (6), influence of pastor or evangelist (4), influence of Christian parents (3), influence of Christian school (3), interest aroused by other forms of Christian service (2), consecration following illness or death in family (2), influence of brother (1), interest in rural improvement (1). This list may be compared with the "Motives for Entering the Ministry" given by 533 theological students in China,⁶ where the order of frequency is: a call or urge, altruistic motive of service, devotion to Christ, needs of men and the world, supremacy of the ministry as a vocation, influence of other people, personal aims.

(357) The average period that these preachers have served as salaried workers is 17.2 years. This means that they began their work in the church at about 26 years of age. The accounts which they give of experience during their ministry or before they entered the ministry are not sufficiently complete to attempt a detailed classification. Many were teachers, members of evangelistic bands or colporteurs, and some farmed or did business before they undertook full-time work for the church. A little more than one-half went directly through school and theological seminary or Bible school and then began their ministry. The majority have always served in rural churches although some held city charges or assistantships.

(359) Thirty-seven ordained pastors in this study have been ordained for an average period of 10.1 years. They served in the church for a period of five to ten years before ordination.

(360) In spite of many difficulties this group of preachers has been faithful and steady. Only six have left the ministry or full-time Christian work for any period of time. Three left temporarily because of political disturbances, one took other work for a while because of financial problems. One worked for a higher salary in the Y.M.C.A. for a few years but later returned to the rural ministry. None expects to have to leave the ministry in the immediate future.

(361) *The Preacher's Wife.* An educated and consecrated preacher's wife, trained in Christian service, is a great asset to a rural church. Yet here is one of the great weaknesses in rural

⁶ *Education for Service in the Christian Church in China*, pp. 64-67.

Christian leadership. The surveyors report that fifteen of the wives of preachers in these case studies are illiterate, and five are slightly literate. Only one-half, 38, are helping in the work of the church. Some of the latter group have had good school opportunities: 8 are primary school graduates, 20 are ex-students or graduates of middle schools. Ten are reported as having studied in Bible schools. The grade of women's Bible schools in China varies a great deal; some are senior training schools for women evangelists, others are little more than adult literacy schools where women learn to read the Bible. Some of this number, certainly, have had special training for Christian service. Eleven wives have had experience in teaching school. One has studied in a theological seminary. One has been taught to read by her husband and is now a great help in church work. Many of these wives have the care of small children and yet, if they are interested, they can be of great assistance to their husbands. More important, they can demonstrate what a Christian home should be like. The types of service which about half the number are rendering include: teaching Sunday School and Primary School classes, leading meetings for women and teaching women, visiting women members, teaching singing, playing the organ, meeting and entertaining visitors. Two surveys report that the wife lives at her native home and not at the church.

Two extremes are reported in the case studies. In one church the preacher's illiterate wife takes no interest in church work and her conversation and character are a hindrance to the influence of Christianity. In another church, the wife of the pastor is known and loved throughout the community and the growth of the church is largely due to her remarkable personality. The work of Mrs. Siek, "pastor" of the Pahsua Church (Church No. 62), with women, young people and children, is another demonstration of the possibilities of leadership which educated Christian women can contribute to the rural church and community.

The wives of pastors usually give voluntary service to the church. Only three receive additional salary, one for teaching in a government school, two others as paid women evangelists.

(362) *Salary.* The mean average monthly salary of 68 rural preachers is 28.22 *yuan* (about U.S. \$8.65 at exchange rate in 1937), the range being from 12.00 to 100.00 *yuan*. About two-thirds receive 30.00 *yuan* or less. The distribution of salaries is as follows:

TABLE XVI. DISTRIBUTION OF SALARIES OF
68 RURAL MINISTERS

	<i>Number receiving this salary per month</i>	<i>Percentage of total receiving this salary per month</i>
10— 19 <i>yuan</i>	17	25.00
20— 29 <i>yuan</i>	26	38.6
30— 39 <i>yuan</i>	14	19.4
40— 49 <i>yuan</i>	7	10.3
50— 59 <i>yuan</i>	1	1.4
60— 69 <i>yuan</i>	1	1.4
90—100 <i>yuan</i>	2	3.9
Total	68	100.0

Of the three salaries above 60 *yuan* two are paid by one denomination which has a high scale of salaries and subsidies, and one to a supervisor with special training and experience. Excluding these the mean average salary is only 25.50 *yuan*. W. A. Anderson's estimate of 20 to 30 *yuan* per month is substantially correct.⁷

In the case of 51 preachers, the percentage of salary from mission or denominational funds averaged 75 per cent and the percentage from local church contributions 25 per cent. Fourteen churches report that all of the salary comes from the mission or denominations, and 4 churches that all of the salary is raised locally. In 13 other churches, one-half or more of the preacher's salary is raised locally, signifying that one-third of the 51 preachers are supported from 50 to 100 per cent by their congregations. In some cases local contributions are paid to a district or circuit fund and the preacher is paid from this fund which combines contributions from church members and mission grants; so it is difficult to determine the exact proportion of the minister's salary contributed locally. In a few other cases there are special sources of support, local school fees, funds for a special project or experiment, financial aid from a near-by institution. But these are the exceptions rather than the rule. The proportion of local church expenses which the members contribute is much larger, as we shall see in a later section. The data here show that the rural churches are paying for about one-fourth of the cost of their ministry. If the salaries and expenses of all supervisory and training work were added, the proportion would be still lower.

⁷ *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact-Finder's Reports*, V, Part II, 206.

It is interesting to compare the China data with the studies of the home mission aid to village and open country churches in the United States, made by Brunner and Kolb.⁸ In 21 sample counties, the proportion of mission-aided Protestant churches was 21.4 per cent; in 140 sample village communities the proportion of mission-aided churches was 14.1 per cent. The proportion of open-country churches receiving mission aid was 16 per cent. "Virtually half of the villages have in them some church receiving aid." The average amount of home mission aid per church was \$393. This amount is one-sixth of the average budget of village churches and one-half of the average budget of open-country churches. If, because of lower incomes in rural areas, and also in many cases because of denominational competition, mission grants are being continued to a considerable proportion of rural churches in America, there would seem to be no reason why mission funds should not be used wisely to help plant and nurture rural churches in China where there is practically no competition, until such time as the church is strong enough in numbers and in quality of life to support its own leadership and program.

In 24 cases the preacher's salary is paid to him by a district circuit or central organization of the denomination, in 27 cases by the denominational organization and the local church both (each a share), in 9 cases by the local church only, in 4 cases by an educational institution, in one case by a missionary. The day of mission funds being paid over directly to preachers by missionaries is passing.

In 62 churches the pastor or preacher lives in a house provided for him, usually rooms connected with the church. In 6 churches, he lives in his own house or some other building not provided by the church. In one case, the preacher pays rent himself.

The amount of perquisites which the rural preacher receives is not large. Nine report that they get an extra allowance or stipend for their children; 9 report scholarships or reduced expenses for their children in Christian schools; 7 are given small amounts for special expenses, and 4 mention help with medical expenses or hospital fees. Eight report pension or group insurance funds to which they pay something and from which they will receive some benefit. These data do not include special gifts which may be made

⁸ Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, p. 231.

by individual missionary or Chinese friends to the preachers, but the total amount of these is probably very small.

(363) Does the rural preacher have other sources of support to supplement his income? Twenty-four, or more than one-third, of the preachers in this group, report that they own some property, chiefly land. Eleven preachers who mentioned income from property receive an average of about 200 *yuan* in good crop years. One preacher reports 50 *yuan* a year from his father, and another the same amount from his son in business. One makes 50 *yuan* a year from a small clinic. A few churches supplement the income of their ministers with gifts of grain, vegetables and fruits.

(364-365) Sixteen, or about one-fourth of the group, report that they have a servant, usually an old woman, to help with the cooking and care of children. The cost of such help is little more than the food the servant eats but even so only the preachers with higher salaries can generally afford it. Two preachers who have farms report two servants each.

Sixteen preachers report that they have some savings, generally in land or in pension funds. Seventeen report debts, averaging about 100 *yuan*. By far the largest number, 29, mention the education of their children as their most serious financial problem. Four mention debts, six an income insufficient for their daily needs, and one a salary not paid regularly.

The salary of the rural minister in China cannot be compared merely with the income of the farmer. He has special needs, he is expected to hold the position of an educated leader in the community, he wants to educate his children, he should have books and magazines. If he is a man of any worthy qualifications, his income must be compared with that of other rural social workers such as primary school teachers, agricultural extension workers, supervisors of cooperatives, or village officials in the *hsien* government. The salaries of primary school teachers in one *hsien* studied (Church No. 30) are: 10 to 19 *yuan*, 37.6 per cent; 21 to 30 *yuan*, 56.7 per cent; over 30 *yuan*, 5.7 per cent. Most of these teachers are graduates of only junior middle schools or rural normal schools and most of them are between the ages of 20 and 40. The salaries of the other types of rural workers mentioned would average somewhat higher. A capable man with both general education and theological or Bible school training goes into the rural ministry

generally at a financial sacrifice. He usually comes from a farm family or other family with limited income. He sees rural school teachers and government workers being subsidized in their preparation for rural service and receiving an income above the farm family level. An income inadequate for his family needs and for his own advancement and that of his children often causes him worry and impairs the efficiency of his work. So W. A. Anderson's criticism in his study of the rural church in China seems rather one-sided and harsh, "Preachers in training receive free tuition, board and room, books and other necessities. That such a system of complete support, without any sacrifice on the part of the student, leads to weak products is the assertion of many leading Christian workers."⁹

(366) Only one of the preachers in this group is reported to be a member of a political party. Twenty-eight preachers report that they have had some farming experience, mostly gained as children on the farm and when they returned from schools to service in the country. Only one in the group has had special scientific agricultural training.

(367) The surveyors were asked to evaluate the preacher's interest in rural life and reconstruction. The scores given were: Fair or ordinary, 10; strong, 30; very strong, 24.

(368) *Activities of the Rural Preacher.* An attempt was made to discover what activities the rural preachers engage in, what activities occupy the largest portion of their time, and what activities are considered most important by them. The preachers in the case studies were asked to check a prepared list in the Survey Schedule. The total number who marked each item is given in the following table.

This table repays study. What activities claim most time and attention are easily seen. All of the activities listed have been carried on in some parishes. Personal and family devotions, study, preaching to Christians and non-Christians, visitation of members, worship services, evangelistic campaigns, prayer meetings, Sunday School and Bible classes, weddings and funerals, forms of personal service, are mentioned most often in the list of things done. Some activities, however, are only at special times, such as evangelistic campaigns and revivals, conferences, weddings and funerals, and

⁹ *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact-Finder's Reports*, V, Part II, 206.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

TABLE XVII. ACTIVITIES OF 64 RURAL
PASTORS AND PREACHERS

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Total Number Reporting Each Activity Carried on by him during past year</i>	<i>Occupying largest part of his time</i>	<i>Considered most important by him</i>
Daily personal devotions	62	18	35
Family worship (in own home)	53	51	17
Study and intellectual preparation	56	23	22
Preaching to Christians	60	35	33
Preaching to non-Christians	56	28	27
Personal evangelism	57	21	23
Special evangelistic campaigns	45	9	5
Leading revival meetings	16	4	4
Pastoral visitation of Christians	62	40	36
Leading worship services	57	23	20
Conducting wedding and funeral services	55	8	2
Teaching Sunday School or Bible classes	42	16	10
Leading prayer meetings	55	21	15
Teaching primary school pupils	17	6	5
Teaching adult literacy classes	26	5	6
Promoting mass education	30	7	10
Promoting Sunday Schools	33	7	13
Work with children	25	5	8
Health education or hygiene	23	9	11
Making community contacts	43	15	8
Helping members in lawsuits	12	2	1
Helping members in other difficulties	55	14	12
Social service activities	32	12	12
Gardening or agriculture	19	6	2
Personal recreation	14	2	3
Writing, literary work	20	3	2
Correspondence	31	4	5
General reading (newspapers, etc.)	52	11	4
Administration or business of church	45	18	9
Committee work, regional or national organizations	19	4	1
Distribution of literature	24	5	4
Leading communion services	34	8	8
Training church members to serve	50	21	20
Training lay-workers	37	12	17
Organization and leadership of small groups	24	5	5

THE CHURCH

TABLE XVII. ACTIVITIES OF 64 RURAL PASTORS
AND PREACHERS—*Continued.*

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Total Number Reporting Each Activity</i>		
	<i>Carried on by him during past year</i>	<i>Occupying largest part of his time</i>	<i>Considered most important by him</i>
Attending conferences	33	6	2
Directing games and recreation	17	3	2
Leading boys' or girls' clubs	9	2	2
Raising money	41	7	5
Writing contracts, mortgages, or other papers for members and friends	13	1	0
Writing letters for others	42	4	1
Special experiments and projects	11	3	3
Care of church property	35	3	4
Housekeeping work, cooking, sweeping, help in care of children, etc.	42	11	3

hence occupy only a small portion of the total time in a year. Preaching, leading worship services, visitation of Christians, and some training of members, seem to occupy most of the time of these preachers. Graded religious education, teaching of literacy classes, special work with children and youth, work on a garden or farm, personal recreation, community service, writing, do not occupy much time of the group as a whole. The work to which they give most time is generally considered most important, and in most cases this is the conventional work of a preacher. There are signs, however, of new interests. A rather large proportion of those who are carrying on some training of lay-workers consider this most important, showing the growing attention to this work. The preachers tend to minimize the importance of service, even of forms of personal service. The old but dangerous custom of helping church members in lawsuits lingers in some sections but few now consider this important. A much larger number are helping members in various other ways, but only a small proportion seem to value such work. The rural preacher is evidently not called upon to serve in committees and regional or national organizations, whether denominational or interdenominational, to the extent that the urban pastor is. This raises the question whether the point of view and the needs of the rural church are being presented sufficiently in large conferences.

(370) The preachers were asked whether they had any special hobbies or interests aside from their church work. Only 20 answered. Several mention music, photography and gardening. There are scattered references to reading, calligraphy, games, fishing. One very successful rural pastor says that every rural worker should have some hobby or special interest which would give him recreation and wholesome diversion and at the same time increase his appreciation of rural life.

The rest of the data regarding pastors and preachers in the case studies of 73 churches is omitted from this volume.

4. *Other Resident Paid Workers or Helpers.*

(393) Rural churches sometimes have as assistants men evangelists who help locally and also in extension work; women evangelists or "Bible women" as they are called in some sections; and teachers in the Christian primary school who help in the work of the church.

Twenty-nine of the 73 sample churches studied report salaried workers other than the resident pastor or preacher in charge. Twenty-one report women only; seven, men and women; and one, a man assistant only. A total of 35 women evangelists and 10 men evangelists were named. Three churches which are work and training centers for large parishes report four or five workers each; the rest report only one, or at the most, two extra workers. The 28 churches, little more than one-third of the total number, who have women assistants, expect them to help chiefly in evangelistic and teaching work with women and children.

The training of these women varies from the old type of education and lower-grade Bible school to senior grade schools for women evangelists. Their average age (24 reporting) is just 40 years, and the median the same. The monthly salary which they receive varies from 6 *yuan* to 30 *yuan*. All but one, however, receive 20 *yuan* or less, and the average salary is 14.85 *yuan*, more than 10 *yuan* less than the average salary of pastors and preachers. The salaries of the women workers are usually paid by some special mission or denominational funds; in no case does the local church assume responsibility.

Among the ten men assistants listed, all are evangelists but two, a young man with agricultural training and a health worker.

Twelve churches out of the 37 which have primary schools

connected with them mention school teachers as helpers in the work of the church.

More than half of these assistants work full time at the church surveyed. A considerable number live at the church surveyed and serve several points.

There is a great need for special women workers for rural churches—in the home, among mothers, and among children. A few workers with special training are being used and their work seems to be most effective. The majority of women evangelists, from the reports of the surveyors, carry on much the same type of work as the pastors and men evangelists.

5. *Lay-Worker in Charge.*

(394-399) In the 15 churches organized under lay leadership are 25 men reported as being appointed or elected to definite positions of responsibility in the church. The majority are under 40 years of age but a few older men bring the average up to 44. Four of them have been Christians only two or three years while one has been a Christian for fifty years; their average number of years in the church is fifteen. Eight of the men have received an old style education, 9 have studied in primary school, 4 have studied in a Bible institute or short course, 3 have been to Middle School and one is "self-educated." Most of them have had some special training for their responsibility as lay-workers in charge, through institutes or short-term schools promoted by their denomination or through reading courses and supervision in service. Their responsibilities are generally oversight of the church and its work in the absence of a resident pastor or preacher, preaching, leading worship services, teaching Bible classes and Sunday School classes, and keeping church records.

Six of the men were elected to their responsibilities by the congregation but the majority have been appointed by the denominational organization or supervisor. The "local preachers" in the Methodist circuit system and the "lay readers" in the *Sheng Kung Hui* (Episcopal and Anglican) churches are appointed after examination and are given a definite course of training over a period of years. Their work does not differ much from that done by a higher grade of "volunteer workers" or lay leaders in other church groups but they are given more definite standing and responsibility. The English Methodists have tried to introduce the plan of class

meetings under their "local preachers." The English Baptist churches in Shantung (now affiliated with the Church of Christ in China) have used a method similar to the Methodist class leaders' meeting. A parish association in one *hsien* is a unit, consisting of many Christian village groups and having a pastor and deacons. In each village group there is a voluntary leader whose duties are to keep church records, lead worship services, help the deacons to raise funds, entertain the pastor when he comes to visit the group and represent the group in the monthly parish leaders' meeting which is usually a whole day meeting. The Tsouping Church (Church No. 35) with its eight branch village churches in the *hsien* follows this method.¹⁰

The group of lay-workers studied in this Survey had varied experiences before becoming recognized "lay-leaders." Some had been active in witnessing, or had served as church officers; others had been teaching classes or helping in other phases of the church work. They were evidently chosen or appointed because of recognized spiritual qualities or qualities of leadership. The surveyors describe four men as having had very remarkable religious experiences. One self-appointed "leader" was said to be hard-headed and difficult to work with; he monopolizes the leadership and does not allow any one else to help. But this seems to be the exception rather than the rule if there is good supervision. These lay-leaders have been holding their present responsibilities for varying periods of time, from one to twenty years. Eight of them are new workers with experience of less than five years.

All of these lay-leaders have regular occupations of their own, most of them being farmers or artisans. The time they can give therefore is limited. Three give a day or less a week to the work of the church, nine give one to three days, two give only Sundays, two are reported to give most or all of their time, and two report that the time spent is indefinite.

All but six give their services to the church entirely free. Five are reported as receiving a little "expense money." The church sometimes pays for a substitute for one who has a trade, so that he can give more time to the church.

The surveyors generally speak highly of these lay-leaders: "Very earnest," "very zealous but needs further training," "a great help

¹⁰ *Education for Service in the Christian Church in China*, Ch. 6, has a recent description of systems of lay service in different church bodies.

to the church," "so willing and aggressive that other members feel left out," "God has given them great grace," "very active in service to the community." Two men are said to be earnest but lacking in plan or method so that results are scattered. One of the most remarkable examples of lay leadership is in the Shiherpa Church (Church No. 65) which has not had a resident preacher from the beginning. The congregation elects "elders," and one man who gives most of his time to directing the work of the church. This leader now is only 36 years of age. The surveyor says of this church, "The church is admirably manned by a band of devoted voluntary workers. They are men and women whose hearts have been touched by the Spirit of God. As we see it, there is one great need in the work and that is for a whole time pastor to shepherd the flock. Many of the leaders in the church, however, are averse to any form of a paid ministry."

6. *Inner Organization of the Church Officers and Voluntary Workers.*

(400-401) Missions and missionaries from the West have tended naturally to introduce forms of church government and of local church organization which were characteristic of their own denomination and most familiar to them. We find the Methodist churches organized with stewards and class leaders, Presbyterian churches with elders, Congregational churches with committees, Episcopal churches with vestrymen. It is also true that local conditions and needs, especially in rural churches, modify old systems and sometimes create new ones. Various forms of organization sometimes exist within the same church body due to differences in resources of local leadership or differences in program.

The rural churches in this study were asked to furnish lists of their officers and to indicate what their chief responsibilities were. From this information an effort has been made to determine what types of officers and organization are found most frequently in these churches.

Elders and deacons form the most common group of officers, being found in 24 churches, and elders alone in 2. Deacons are the most important officers in 12 churches and a church committee of some kind in 16. Officers who have the chief responsibility in other churches are: the *tong-sze*, a kind of trustee; stewards, class leaders, vestrymen.

Sixty-six churches list a total of 450 officers, an average of about 7 to each church. Some churches have only 2, some as many as 24 on their roll. The larger numbers include members of the central or executive committee of the church.

a. Elders are mentioned by 25 churches, from one to five in one church. The most common number is two.

b. Deacons and stewards are mentioned by 44 churches. The churches founded by the English Methodist Mission have three kinds of stewards: society stewards, chapel stewards and poor stewards (who help to prepare for Holy Communion and take charge of the offering for the poor on that day). The number of these officers varies from two to twelve in the churches studied, with an average of about four.

c. Some kind of church committee is the basis of organization in 16 churches; the membership of these committees is most commonly four or five.

d. Secretaries of the church are listed by 33 churches and treasurers by 37. Occasionally there are two treasurers, one to receive funds and keep the accounts and the other to disburse funds. These two officers check each other. Several churches have a Finance Committee also.

e. *Tong-sze*, or trustees, are mentioned by 11 churches, other officers in charge of business or property by 7, class leaders by 4.

f. In addition to these regular officers are listed other workers who sometimes sit with the responsible session, board or committee in their meetings: Sunday School superintendents, primary school teachers, leader of youth or children's work, worker with women, lay preachers.

In the majority of churches, the study shows, the terms of service of these responsible officers are definitely limited, usually one to three years, rather than for life.

The work the officers do is varied. They help to examine inquirers, visit church members, assist in raising of funds, keep records and accounts, teach classes, take charge of church property, usher in the worship services. Some are earnest and take their responsibilities seriously; some are officers only in name. Much depends upon the way in which the resident or supervising pastor guides and develops this group.

In one interesting clan village church (Church No. 39) eight out of the nine *tong-sze* or trustees of the church have the same surname, T'an.

(402) Twenty-one churches, less than one-third of the total number, report other committees or responsible groups in addition

THE CHURCH

to the officers. But some of these few churches give the impression, through their reports, of a very active program. Many members are enlisted to serve on *pu*, *tsu* or *ku*, committees or divisions of the church's work. Five report Sunday School or Religious Education Committees and five have Social Service groups. Several have their preaching bands well organized. Four report a special committee of the church on work for women. Three of the churches in the study have a very complete plan to make use of a large number of members, assigning them various responsibilities for definite periods of time—such as care of church property, sweeping the church building, distributing literature to members and inquirers, ringing the bell, ushering, recording attendance at church. In a few churches there are permanent committees on health work, cooperatives, mass education, work for children, extension evangelism. The contrast between such churches where a large proportion of the membership is learning by participation, and the churches where a preacher or perhaps an elder does all the work and the members are passive, is very marked.

(403) But the life and work of the church does not all center in the church building and Sunday activities. There is much that Christians can do in their own homes and villages and in connection with their regular occupations. The churches were asked how many qualified "voluntary workers" or lay-workers they had and what percentage of all members were actively helping some way in the work of the church. Not the same interpretation is given everywhere to the term "voluntary worker," for some report only one and some report more than fifty. But it is interesting, and also encouraging to record that 48 churches report the help of "voluntary workers," an average of about six men and three women to each church.

There is also wide variation in the proportion of members who are actively helping the church in some way. A few churches report as many as 90 per cent, and others only 5 per cent. One discouraged surveyor said, "not more than 2 per cent." The majority of the 64 answers to this question range between 10 and 40 per cent, with the average about 30 per cent, a little higher than the percentage of "very active and earnest members" reported under Question 283.

(404) The methods which the churches are using to train

their lay-workers and volunteers will be discussed more fully in a later section but may be mentioned briefly here. Forty-two of the surveyors report plans for such training. Twenty-four churches, or one-third of the total number, send members to some central officers' class or lay-training school for one week or longer each year. Five mention a Bible conference for the district. In twelve churches some kind of local training institute is held once or oftener a year. Six churches, mostly Wesleyan, use the plan of sending supervisors or teams to train the volunteer workers where they are. A number of special schools for women are reported. In the preparation of lay-workers classes for elementary and more advanced groups seem to be necessary. Training in the local situation and in institutes where a larger force of teachers and a better program of training are possible, both have their advantages. The answers to these questions reveal a growing interest in the whole problem. The National Committee for Christian Religious Education has taken lay-training as one of its major tasks for the next few years and the results of its work are already being felt in some of the areas where the churches of this study are located.

(405) Fifty-three surveyors say that the responsibility of the church members for the life of the church has increased during the past few years; thirteen that it is about the same; and three report that interest has decreased. The last three give as their reasons: lack of a spirit of love and service in the church, need of a theologically trained pastor and reorganization of the church, need of a resident pastor to do pastoral work. To put responsibility on the church members themselves does not automatically make them active lay-workers, unless they are inspired and are given some training in the work they are to do.

Section 7, "Representatives to Larger Organizations," and Section 8, "Church Polity," omitted.

V. FINANCE

(418-420) *Mission or Denominational Policy regarding Financial Support.* From the very beginning of the missionary enterprise in China serious attention has been given to the problem of financial support of new churches. How could mission funds be invested most fruitfully in evangelism and in the organization and strengthening of Christian groups? In the early days of village

evangelism in Shantung there was frequent and earnest discussion of this topic. Rev. John L. Nevius proposed what he called a "New System," whereby mission funds would be used solely for itinerant evangelists but not for local preachers. "The Old System depends largely on paid native agency, while the new system deprecates and seeks to minimize such agency. Both alike seek ultimately the establishment of independent, self-reliant and aggressive native churches. The Old System strives, by the use of foreign funds, to foster and stimulate the growth of the native churches in the first stage of their development, and then gradually to discontinue the use of such funds; while those who adopt the New System think that the desired object may be best attained by applying principles of independence and self-reliance from the beginning. The Old uses freely, and as far as practicable, the more advanced and intelligent of the native church members, in the capacity of native colporteurs, Bible agents, evangelists or heads of stations; while the New proceeds on the assumption that the persons employed in these various capacities would be more useful in the end by being left in their original homes and employments."¹ Dr. Nevius envisaged a system of village chapels similar to many branch churches today, built by the Christians themselves, with voluntary leaders who would lead worship services, teach and instruct, and direct the work of the church, all under the supervision of missionaries and evangelists in the area.

The so-called Nevius plan was tried by some of the Northern Presbyterian missionaries and to a great extent by English Baptist missionaries in Shantung. Dr. Nevius claimed that he himself had established more than sixty village stations "almost exclusively through the voluntary efforts of unpaid church members," and with never more than four Chinese salaried helpers. At the Missionary Conference in 1877 there was a heated debate over mission policies in relation to self-support. Dr. C. W. Mateer pointed out some of the dangers in a system with no professional trained ministry.

¹ Dr. John L. Nevius' "Methods of Mission Work" first appeared as a series of articles in the *Chinese Recorder*. It was published in book form in 1886 in China, was reprinted in the United States in 1895 and in London in 1898. The Christian Literature Society (Shanghai) recently republished the articles in a booklet, *Methods of Mission Work* (1936).

Although the Nevius methods were never fully tried out in China they became the basis of policy in much mission work in Korea. The results are pictured by Dr. Charles Allen Clark in *The Korean Church and the Nevius Methods* (Fleming H. Revell, 1930).

"Each one wants his own church in his own house. They do not feel the need of a pastor, will not call one, because they do not want to pay him. . . . The church has neither unity nor life. . . . Encourage these weak churches to seek a pastor, and help them to support him, always taking pains to stimulate them to do their full share, and only supplying their lack of ability."²

In 1900 Dr. Mateer wrote further criticisms of the results of the Nevius method in a series of articles in *The Chinese Recorder*.³ He pointed out that Dr. Nevius was opposed chiefly to the paying of local Christians to do church work rather than to paying of trained ministers. He said that he had made a study of the 60 stations reported by Dr. Nevius and found less than half, 23, still existing. These were now grouped into 11 churches, with pastors in 3, and with careful supervision over the remainder. Only about one-third of the local leaders had remained active and earnest. Dr. Mateer's conclusion was that careful supervision and some trained pastors were essential to a system of local unpaid lay leaders. The Shantung Missionary Conference in 1898 had generally taken the same position although many felt that Dr. Nevius had made a needed protest against excessive and unwise use of foreign money.⁴

More recently Mr. S. J. W. Clark of England has been the exponent of a method similar to the Nevius plan where "self-supporting" village churches would be established from the very beginning. Mr. Clark declared, "No pastor may be in the service of a mission, nor may the salary of a pastor, or of anyone who is called by some other name but who is doing pastoral work, be paid either wholly or in part out of mission funds. The church must stand upon the basis of self-support."⁵ Mr. Clark's plan was introduced into the Siaochang field of the London Mission in southern Hopei and has been the basis of work in that area. A large staff of salaried evangelists is used to visit, supervise and train the independent local churches and Christian groups.

The 1922 Survey Volume summarized the various viewpoints on the question of financial grants to churches thus, "Opinions on

² *Records of the General Conference of Protestant Missionaries of China held at Shanghai, May 10-24, 1877*, p. 337.

³ Mateer, C. W., "A Review of Methods of Mission Work," in *The Chinese Recorder*, March, April, May, 1900, pp. 109-122, 163-174, 217-232.

⁴ *Report of Shantung Missionary Conference, 1898*, pp. 35 ff.

⁵ Clark, S. J. W., in *World Dominion*, IV, 217.

and practice of self-support rotate around two determining ideas. First, that complete financial independence is essential to real church progress and second, that subsidization will help to bring about more rapid progress and finally more satisfactory self-support. Possibly facts could be produced to show that under certain conditions both these ideas have worked, though the standard of work is an important and varying element in the situation. . . . A deep desire for self-propagation would seem to be the most effective stimulant."⁶

Within the past few years reductions in mission funds and other circumstances have led many missions and church groups to study afresh the whole question of achieving local self-support. The Presbyterian Missions (North) adopted in 1934 the drastic "Project Plan," withdrawing all grants toward salaries from local churches and using the funds released for more new work and "projects." Other missions have planned a more gradual and scaled reduction. Some rural churches are receiving no mission aid.

What is the situation in the 73 representative rural churches in this Survey? Five churches report that a mission grant is still given "as needed" to supplement what the local members contribute. Nearly one-third of the churches, 21, report that they are receiving mission grants on a steadily decreasing basis. The churches supported by the Presbyterian Missions (North) and a few others in the same presbyteries with them, require pastors or preachers to do "new work" in another area for any mission aid that is given. The local church pays for the time of the pastor which it uses. In the *Sheng Kung Hui* and English Methodist churches contributions of church members are paid to a central fund and the central organization supports the preachers, either in local churches or as travelling evangelists. In this way a definite scale of salaries is maintained. Other church groups, such as the Methodists (Methodist Episcopal and Methodist South) have made serious reductions in grants for salaries. Some mission and church groups expect the local congregation to assume all current expenses while they provide the supervision and training. A small proportion of the churches studied are now able to care for their local expenses and also provide for the support of a resident pastor or preacher. Four churches report endowment plans. The majority of churches report that

⁶ *Christian Occupation of China*, p. 36.

financial help from outside has diminished within the past five years. In many cases the total amount of member contributions has shown a proportionate rise. Not enough data were secured on comparative financial statements for 1931 and 1936 to warrant any detailed conclusions.

The financial statements for 1936, however, reveal many interesting facts which are summarized below. It must be remembered that financial policies vary in different mission and church groups, that some of these churches are in centers of extension and training work which require larger budgets and others are in isolated villages, and that economic conditions are not the same all over China. The data and interpretations which follow have a bearing upon all phases of the life and work of the rural church both now and in the future, and deserve careful consideration by all Christian rural leaders.

(421) *Financial Statement of the Church for 1936.* Sixty-seven churches furnish statements of their income and expenditures for the year previous to the Survey, 1936. Some of the surveyors found it difficult to get itemized accounts and exact totals, but the statements on the whole are fairly clear. In several cases where member contributions are paid to the circuit or a central fund and a preacher is appointed for full or part time by the circuit or central organization, the local contributions are listed as income and salaries are considered as part of both income and expenditure of the local church. Otherwise it would not be possible to compare churches in this system with churches where funds are all handled locally.

Amounts are in Chinese currency. At the time of the survey, 1936-1937, one *yuan* was about U.S. \$.30. Since the beginning of the war the value of the Chinese dollar has depreciated in terms of foreign currency, and costs of living have risen proportionately. This has naturally affected the whole question of church support.

Table XVIII shows the number and per cent of churches reporting each item and the average amounts for each item per church.

(422) *Community Enterprises of which Pastor is Treasurer.* In 12 churches the pastor or other church workers have helped to raise funds for community enterprises or projects which have not gone through the church treasury, or they have served as treasurer for community enterprises. The following projects are

THE CHURCH

TABLE XVIII. ITEMS IN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
OF 67 RURAL CHURCHES FOR YEAR 1936

<i>Income</i>	<i>Number and per cent of churches reporting this item</i>	<i>Average amount per church reporting</i>	<i>Average amount per church (all churches)</i>
<i>Outside Sources of Income</i>			
Mission or denominational subsidy	51 (75%)	381 yuan	290 yuan
Special mission or church funds	8 (12%)	146	17
Other gifts or funds	6 (9%)	186	17
No outside subsidy	13 (19%)	...	...
Average, all outside sources	54 (81%)	402	324
<i>Local Sources of Income</i>			
Annual pledges by members, paid in	59 (88%)	104	93
Sunday offerings	44 (66%)	30	30
Group offerings, Sunday School, societies	17 (24%)	24	6
Special Day offerings, Christmas, Thanksgiving, etc.	42 (63%)	22	14
Children's offerings	4 (6%)	11	.6
Contribution of farm produce (Money equivalent)	10 (15%)	64	10
Contributions from absent members	10 (15%)	13	2
Contributions at time of baptism	3 (4%)	5	.2
Special thank offerings	22 (33%)	39	13
Produce from church land or other investment	8 (12%)	37	5
Interest on endowment	11 (16%)	77	12
Rent of property	10 (15%)	36	5
Contributions from non-Christian community	3 (4%)	34	1.5
Other sources	29 (43%)	43	24
Average, all local sources	67 (100%)		204 yuan*
Average, all income	67 (100%)		528 yuan

* Since the averages for each item are given in round numbers of *yuan*, the total of these averages is slightly different from the average of total income and expenditures by the 67 churches. The sum of the item averages under income is 530 *yuan*, under expenditures 505 *yuan*.

The difference between average income and expenditure is due to the fact that the financial statements as reported do not always balance. Fifteen churches reported balances, 20 reported deficits, in 25 statements there was a balance of income and expenditure and 7 statements were not clear at this point.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

TABLE XVIII. ITEMS IN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF
67 RURAL CHURCHES FOR YEAR 1936—Continued

<i>Expenditures</i>	<i>Number and per cent of churches reporting this item</i>	<i>Average amount per church reporting</i>	<i>Average amount per church (all churches)</i>
Salary of pastor or preacher	55 (82%)	319 yuan	255 yuan
Salaries of other workers	28 (42%)	199	85
Wages of gatemen and servants	13 (19%)	42	11
Rent for church building	4 (6%)	142	8
Upkeep of buildings, repairs, etc.	45 (67%)	44	30
Other running expenses, light, water, supplies	46 (69%)	21	15
Religious Education, Sunday School supplies	28 (42%)	13	5
Benevolence, charity	18 (27%)	18	5
Social Service	15 (22%)	100	22
Extension evangelism	21 (31%)	39	12
Books and newspapers	20 (30%)	7	2
Home Missions	11 (16%)	14	2
Contribution to regional or central church organization	35 (54%)	18	9
Other expenses	41 (60%)	62	44
Average, all expenditures	67 (100%)		500 yuan*

* Since the averages for each item are given in round numbers of *yuan*, the total of these averages is slightly different from the average of total income and expenditures by the 67 churches. The sum of the item averages under income is 530 *yuan*, under expenditures 505 *yuan*.

The difference between average income and expenditure is due to the fact that the financial statements as reported do not always balance. Fifteen churches reported balances, 20 reported deficits, in 25 statements there was a balance of income and expenditure and 7 statements were not clear at this point.

reported: Raising funds for famine relief (3), raising funds for a local school (not under church control) (4), building bridges or repairing roads (2), cooperative loan funds (1), war relief funds (1), health and social welfare committee (1), financial campaign to help nearby church erect new building (1). The amounts which passed through the pastor's or preacher's hand varies from 12 to 4,600 *yuan*, five of the amounts being over 500 *yuan*. The average amount is 855 *yuan*.

THE CHURCH

TABLE XIX. FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF SPECIAL PROJECTS, 1936, REPORTED BY 18 CHURCHES

<i>Income</i>	<i>Average amount per church (18 churches)</i>	<i>Average amount per church (All 67 churches)</i>
Special appropriations from mission or denomination (18)	442	119
Non-Christian contributions (10)	76	20
Special Christian contributions (from outside) (3)	70	3
Special Christian contributions (local) (14)	443	92
Average income (18)	1031	234
<i>Expenditures</i>		
Primary schools (16)	471	112
Literacy schools (12)	59	11
Public health, medical service (9)	171	21
Other community service projects (17)	365	94
Average expenditures	1066 <i>yuan</i>	238 <i>yuan</i>

(423) *New Construction, New Equipment and Repairs.* Thirty-two or nearly one-half the sample churches report new construction, expensive repairs or new equipment purchased within the previous two years (1935-1936). These improvements in church property and equipment may be classified as follows:

	<i>Number of churches reporting</i>
Repair work	13
New church building	18
New equipment	3
New well	2
Purchase of land for church	1
Type of improvement not described	3
Additions to building	2

Amounts reported vary from 35 *yuan* for repairs to 4,500 *yuan* for a new church. The average spent per church reporting is 748 *yuan* and the average for all churches in the survey 347 *yuan*. Six of the amounts, for buildings, are over 1,000 *yuan*. If these are excluded, the average amount for the remaining 27 churches is 223 *yuan*.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

An analysis of the sources of these funds shows the following:

<i>Source of funds</i>	<i>Number of churches reporting this source</i>	<i>Percentage of total amount of funds</i>
Mission or denomination	16	36.2
Local contributions	24	58.0
Special outside contributions	5	4.0
Endowment funds	1	1.8
All sources	32	
		100.0

In 11 churches contributions were made by both mission and the local group; in 5 churches by the mission or denomination alone; in 13 churches by the local group alone.

Interpretation and Conclusions

These case studies show more vitality in stewardship and giving among rural churches than has been generally supposed. Rural Christians contribute toward the support of the local church, give in some measure to special projects and give more than half in money and labor to the cost of repairs, new equipment and new church buildings.

The data submitted by 67 churches show that 13 churches, or 19 per cent, receive no mission or denominational aid. Fifty-four receive aid in varying amounts, directly or indirectly. Grants for pastor's salary are not counted unless the pastor definitely resides at this church for a portion of each year, or all the year. All outside sources account for 61 per cent of the income. The remaining 39 per cent is raised locally.

Of the local sources of income annual pledges by the members, paid usually at harvest times or the end of the year but sometimes monthly, account for nearly one-half. Sunday offerings, Special Day offerings, thank offerings and contributions of farm produce account for about one-fourth. Some churches, however, have a much higher proportion of income from gifts of produce or crops from church land. One church (Church No. 30) reports that 56 per cent of its income of 357 *yuan* comes from this source. A few churches, less than one-sixth, have endowments from which they draw interest. In many cases these are funds which have been built up over a period of years and from which loans are made to

members and friends of the church. This plan, according to the reports of some surveyors, is not without its abuses. The majority of churches studied receive contributions through annual pledges, Sunday offerings, and Special Day offerings. The methods of giving farm produce or of contributing labor to church land, and other adaptations of the Lord's Acre plan, are being introduced now in some churches. Fifteen per cent of the churches receive something from rent or part of the church property. Very little comes from children's offerings or from non-Christians.

Some surveyors include amounts in the totals that were not listed under itemized income or expenditures. If we add these the average total income of a rural church is 564 *yuan*. The itemized summary shows a total of 528 *yuan*. The typical church, therefore, receives between five and six hundred dollars a year, about three-fifths from the mission, church body or other outside sources, and about two-fifths from local contributions.

The salaries of the pastor and other resident workers represent the largest item under expenditures, about 68 per cent of the total. Next in order come upkeep and running expenses, social service and extension evangelism. "Other expenses" in many cases is a large unitemized amount. Benevolences, religious education, home missions, books and newspapers account for a very small percentage of the total amount. Many church bodies, of course, make a practice of supplying local churches with Sunday School materials and evangelistic literature. Only four of the churches have to pay rent. The amount for gatemen and servants is comparatively small and shows that many churches are dispensing with such help. Less than one-fourth of the churches report expenditures for benevolences, social service, extension evangelism, books and newspapers. The majority of churches find that support of the pastor, in whole or in part, and care of the church property absorb all of the funds they can raise. Over half of the churches, 54 per cent, report some contribution to the regional or central church organization. These amounts vary very much, from one to over one hundred *yuan*, according to the size of the church and the denominational policy regarding contributions to a central fund. What the church pays to a central fund toward pastor's salary is not included in this item, but under the item "pastor's salary." The typical rural church in our studies spends 500 or

more *yuan* a year, a large proportion of which goes to the salary of the pastor or preacher or to the maintenance of church property and a limited program.

Eighteen churches report special projects for which they receive special funds. Some churches include primary schools, others literacy schools or classes, health work and other forms of community service. Some school fees are also included under income, as special contributions. Excluding school fees the amount contributed locally would be much less. Special service projects are still limited to less than one-third of the churches and the funds for them are largely special grants or special contributions in the local community and some school fees. The average amount for the 18 churches reporting projects is a little over 1,000 *yuan*.

Local church members assume a larger share of financial responsibility in repairs and in the building of new churches. The funds for such property improvement are often raised over a period of years in response to appeal for a concrete need. In one-half of the cases the mission or denomination made some grant to help the local group, in less than one-sixth of the cases did the mission assume entire responsibility. Five churches raised funds for construction of a new building, ranging from 1,000 to 4,500 *yuan*. The average amount for repairs, additions to buildings or new equipment, is 223 *yuan*. One church (Church No. 64) furnished an itemized account of how it spent 150.50 *yuan* raised by local Christians: Repair of guest room 30, whitewashing 30, new lamps 36, Bibles 30, communion set 10, bulletin boards 4, pulpit 10.50. This and other reports of money and labor gifts for improvements show how the interest and support of rural Christians may be aroused when a concrete project demanding their help is presented.

The average rural church in the United States expends about \$1,400 a year,⁷ while in China the average expenditure is not more than \$175 (in U. S. currency), or one-eighth the U. S. average. The average cost to mission societies of the average rural parish in China is about \$100 a year (U. S.). In terms of investment in the building of Christian rural communities in China, this is not a large amount. Granted, of course, that the rural churches themselves are not entirely dependent upon the

⁷ Fry, C. L., *The U. S. Looks at Its Churches*, p. 94.

older church of the West but are assuming an increasing measure of support themselves. And this is the trend in the majority of sample churches surveyed.

Church Member Contributions. Even more important in a study of the whole question of self-support and maintenance of parish programs is an analysis of the contribution per member. How much are rural Christians now giving to the church and how much could they give? How do their gifts compare with the expenditures of non-Christians for religious practices? Under what mission or denominational policies are gifts per member increasing most rapidly? How do member contributions in proportion to standard of living compare with similar statistics in the United States? Data were sought from the churches which would help in answering such questions.

(424-425) *Number of Members Contributing.* Churches were asked to give the number of their members who made contributions of money, produce or labor to the church, and the number of absent members who sent contributions. In some churches absent members and also inquirers are included among contributors. Out of a total of 9,058 members (and in some cases inquirers) from 68 churches, 5,103 or 56.3 per cent are said to have contributed money during the previous year; 582 or 6.4 per cent are said to have given produce or labor, and 62 absent members, less than 1 per cent of the total, are said to have made contributions. A little more than half of the rural Christians give; the large majority give cash and very few absent members help their churches. However, the giving of farm produce and of labor to land or some productive enterprise for the church, is a growing practice and after a few years we may expect to see a much larger proportion of Christians giving in this way.

(426) *Contributions per Member.* Per member contributions were calculated for each church by comparing the total amount of local contributions in cash or in produce with the number of active members. Figures are available for 69 sample churches. The lowest amount per member is ten cents (.10 yuan); the highest amount 6.38 yuan. The average contribution per member for all 69 churches is 1.47 yuan. The amounts are distributed as follows:

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

<i>Contributions per member</i>	<i>Number of churches</i>	<i>Per cent of all churches (69)</i>
Less than 1 yuan	31	45.0
1.00—1.99 yuan	21	30.0
2.00—2.99 yuan	8	11.6
3.00—3.99 yuan	6	8.7
Above 4 yuan	3	4.4

Per family contributions are naturally higher. The average amount per church family (from data of 63 churches) is 2.76 yuan, with variations from .10 to 11.45 yuan.

It is difficult to compare these figures with most of the previous studies in China which generally include both city and rural members. Contributions per member are naturally higher in the cities. J. L. Buck's studies ten years ago include data on 130 Christian families in 13 localities; the average per family was 2.18 yuan,⁸ considerably lower than the figure in this survey. W. A. Anderson summarizes various regional reports on contributions of urban and rural Christians and concludes, "It would appear that a fairly safe generalization for rural Christians in China is that they give, on the average, about one dollar per annum to support their church."⁹ In the judgment of the writer, the amount of contributions per member in rural churches has been slowly increasing. In some churches increased emphasis on giving or new methods of giving are raising the average amount very rapidly.

But wide variations exist, sometimes within the same mission or church group. An effort has been made to discover what factors are associated with higher contributions per member. The 17 churches which report contributions of 2 yuan or more per member were analyzed. Geographical location is something of a factor. All but one of the 17 churches are located in east, central or south China. North China is represented by one church, in Shantung. On the other hand, 3 of the lowest averages are found on Hainan Island, Kuangtung province. The highest 17 are distributed among 9 provinces, with only Hopei, Shansi, Hunan and Kiangsi missing. Six of the lowest 10 are located in Hopei and Shantung provinces where farm income, according to the studies made by Buck and others, is appreciably lower than in other parts of China. Two

⁸ Buck, J. L., *Chinese Farm Economy*, p. 410.

⁹ *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact-Finder's Reports*, V, Part II, 203.

THE CHURCH

are in Hainan and the others in Honan and Hunan.

Sixteen of the 17 churches with contributions per member of 2 *yuan* or more have resident pastors or preachers. The one without a salaried minister is the Shiherhpa Church in Shekiang (Church No. 65) which has had a tradition of lay leadership since its beginnings thirty years ago. Funds contributed there go into new churches in the area and also into an interesting mutual aid and social welfare plan for the members themselves.

The high averages are distributed among ten mission groups, as follows:

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Per cent of all churches of this mission in the survey</i>
China Inland Mission	2	100
Reformed Church in America	1	100
Church Missionary Society	2	67
London Missionary Society	2	67
United Church of Canada	2	67
American Baptist Mission	2	50
Presbyterian, North	3	25
Methodist (English)	1	16
American Board (Congregational)	1	13
Methodist Episcopal	1	11

Fifteen other missions are not represented in this list. Contributions of less than 50 cents per member are found in churches connected with the following missions: Presbyterian, North (3), American Board (3), Methodist Episcopal, Church of Brethren, Reformed Church in U. S., and Augustana Synod each one.

What effect does mission policy have on per member contributions? One should not draw generalizations too quickly from this limited number of studies. But certain facts are significant. The policy of itinerant pastors and evangelists supervising local church groups does not usually result in large per capita contributions. Too often members are satisfied to pay for the upkeep of their little church building and stop there. The American Board and London Mission in north China are using the plan of supervising teams but the average of contributions is not high in those areas. The one Congregational church which is above the two *yuan* line has a resident pastor. And the London Mission churches above the line are in Hupeh and Fukien, not in the Siao-chang

field which has been the laboratory for S. J. W. Clark's self-support plans. The Shihchiatai Church there (Church No. 26) reports an average of 85 cents per member while the average for 1,619 Christians in all 6 *hsien* of this London Mission field is only 40 cents per member. The mission, on the other hand, spends 10,280 *yuan* per year for its evangelistic and supervising teams of 5 ordained, 19 unordained evangelists and 9 Bible women.¹⁰ One wonders if member contributions would not rise more rapidly if some of these pastors had limited parishes where they could do more intensive work.

In spite of the "Project Plan" the averages among churches founded and supported by Presbyterian missions are low. Two of the three churches (only one-fourth of all Presbyterian churches) above the two *yuan* line are churches where there has been a fine record of giving for several years under good training,¹¹ and the experimental parish of Nanking Theological Seminary where new methods of raising church funds have been introduced (Church No. 30). Three of the 10 churches with lowest averages are connected with the Presbyterian Mission (North); and the average for all Presbyterian-founded churches is 1.41, slightly lower than the average in the whole study. Some churches have been discouraged by sudden application of the project principle and too rapid withdrawal of all grants to resident ministers, where long and careful preparation had not been made for assuming self-support. What training in stewardship and giving over a period of years can accomplish is shown in churches of the Haichow (Presbyterian, South) field where under the leadership of Rev. W. C. McLaughlin 21 churches and chapels with 241 baptized Christians give 13.74 *yuan* per member a year, supporting in full ten pastors and supporting partially two other preachers.¹² One of the churches in this group was to have been included in the case studies but the war interrupted.

Two of the churches in the leading list of 17 are located in small *hsien* cities: the rest are all in market-towns and villages and one is in the open country.

How is the program of the church related to church member

¹⁰ Statistics given to writer at time of visit to Siao-chang field, April 4, 1937.

¹¹ J. L. Buck refers to this same church (Church No. 52) in *Chinese Farm Economy*, p. 410. At that time the contributions per family were 3.85 *yuan*.

¹² Letter to writer from Rev. W. C. McLaughlin, May 1937.

contributions? It is difficult to analyze all the factors that enter in. Nevertheless we may note that 7 of these leading 17 churches have a strong program of religious education—training of inquirers and members, and of community service. Two have strong primary schools connected with them and contributions from teachers and students help to bring up the average. One of the churches has a large proportion of merchants who give generously, and another in south China receives some contributions from overseas Chinese. The average is high in two churches because of the custom of expecting contributions from inquirers. From the day a person becomes a learner he is trained in giving to the church. Three of the churches have emphasized stewardship in the past and there has been a long tradition of generous support for the church program. Two churches explain their increased contributions by the recently introduced plan of using gifts of labor and produce and 3 churches in the list are making a special effort to reach church families. Some areas in China have reported that revival movements increased members' contributions. Several of the churches in the list of 17 stress evangelism, especially the two China Inland Mission churches, but in none have there been recent revivals of the emotional type. The proportion of churches which have a community program is significant. Serving the community strengthens the church in the end.

How do church contributions per Christian family compare with the average expenditure of non-Christian families for religious and superstitious practices? The figure for the latter in these studies (see 208) is 6.88 *yuan* while the contribution per Christian family is 2.76 *yuan*, less than half. But it must be remembered that the non-Christian group includes landlords and wealthier farmers, merchants and gentry, classes which are not largely represented in the rural churches. The long tradition of giving for religious practices is another factor. If contributions to special projects, church buildings and repairs are included the average per Christian would approach more closely the usual amount spent by non-Christians for their religious practices. And the experience of some churches shows that the average contributions of non-Christians to their religions can be exceeded. But the church member must feel that he is receiving something from his church and must feel the responsibility and joy of giving.

J. L. Buck, after studying various factors affecting self-support of rural churches, comes to this conclusion, which the writer believes is a sound one, "The three factors of wealth of members, size of the geographical areas used as a unit of church organization, and the number and proportion of Christians within the area are interdependent upon each other. No conclusion can be reached until the ultimate form of church organization and activities is decided. It may be said with all emphasis that none of this can result in a self-supporting church organization unless the form of church organization and its activities are of a kind which the people consider of use to them and worth giving the money to support. Undoubtedly one of the chief reasons why self-support has not been more rapid has been that the members do not really consider what they get worth paying for, to any point of sacrifice. An enlarged and more practical program of church activities calls for better trained, more experienced and better paid pastors but probably it will be found that such a practical program will make self-support much easier even on a high cost basis, because people will pay for things they value."¹³ I would add that the type of leadership, the methods used in contributing to the church and the way in which the church plans for self-support, and educates and inspires its members in giving are also important factors, more important, these studies show, than any general system or policy which a mission or church group adopts.

(427) *Contributions by Members of Churches.* Fourteen churches report gifts from non-members of the local churches, missionaries, members of other churches, etc. The average amount for the churches reporting is 14 *yuan*.

(428) *Tithing.* Churches were asked how many of their members were known to tithe. All but eight replied that there was no tithing, many adding the comment that tithing is difficult or impossible in the country. All but one of the eight churches give estimates of 2 to 5 tithers. One with very generous judgment reports 33 tithers.

(429) *Proportion of Total Church Expense Carried by Church Members.* Churches were asked to estimate the propor-

¹³ Buck, J. L., *The Self-Supporting Church*. National Christian Council Bulletin (Shanghai, 1930).

tion of all church expenses met by local members. In 40 churches the average estimate for percentage of minister's salary paid by the members is 43 per cent; 8 of these churches pay all the minister's salary. In 55 churches the average estimate for percentage of current expenses met by the members is 85 per cent. The average (of 59 churches) proportion of all expenses met locally is 45 per cent. This is 5 per cent higher than the figure deduced on a previous page from the financial statements of the churches. However, in these estimates the local churches may have in mind gifts for buildings, repairs and other special purposes as well as for the regular budget.

(430) *Increase in Contributions during Five-Year Period.* Twenty-nine churches furnished data relating to the increase or decrease of contributions during the preceding five-year period (1932-1936). Twenty-five churches reported increases and four reported decreases during that time. The 4 which are receiving less contributions than formerly attribute this to disturbed conditions in the community, the economic situation or poor leadership. The other 25 churches report increases. Altogether these 29 churches show an increase of member contributions over the five-year period of 22 per cent. This is less than the 30 per cent net gain in membership reported by 5 churches (§289). If gifts for church buildings, repairs and special projects are included the increase in contributions would about equal the gain in membership. However this would not mean that average contributions per member are increasing. In some churches there has been a decided increase in per member giving but this is offset by churches where the amount each member contributes is about the same although the membership has increased.

(432) *"Does the church have any unpaid debts?"* Forty-five churches answer "No" and 7 answer "Yes." The debts listed are small amounts for repairs, etc., except two. One church raised a loan of 2,000 *yuan* for land and building and another a loan of 450 *yuan* to repair sections of the church property which had been destroyed during communist occupation. The debt of these churches is equivalent to only 34 cents per member for all churches in the case studies.

*Comparison of Per Member Contributions in
China and U. S. A.*

Studies by Brunner and Kolb show that per capita contributions in American village churches in 1930 were \$17.84 for village churches and \$10.75 for country churches.¹⁴ The per member contribution in China, according to these studies, is 1.47 *yuan* or about \$.44 in U. S. exchange. Buck estimates that the ratio between rural living standards in China and the United States on an equivalent currency and per capita basis is 1 to 16.6.¹⁵ The per capita contribution in rural China would then be equivalent to \$7.52 in U. S. currency, somewhat less than the U. S. average for country church members. When the brief history of the rural churches in China and the small margin of cash which most farmers have are considered the comparison is not unfavorable to rural Christians in China. And many churches are demonstrating that they can advance far beyond the present average.

(433-436) *Methods of Raising and Disbursing Funds.* Twenty-four churches say that they make an annual budget, 24 say that they do not. Many surveyors did not answer this question and several of the replies are qualified by the statement that the budget is very general, a rough estimate, not on paper, etc. Churches in circuits report that there is always a circuit budget but not necessarily a local one.

Forty-five churches (62 per cent) say that they have a definite plan for raising funds, 14 (19 per cent) reply that they do not.

Fifty churches (79 per cent) report that the members make pledges for the year, only 6 churches (8 per cent) state that they do not solicit pledges. These pledges are usually paid at harvest times or at the end of the year; in some cases monthly; and a few churches reply, "at any time"; "whenever convenient"; "when they can."

Twenty-four churches (33 per cent) have a regular Sunday or other special day for presenting the budget of the church and for soliciting pledges. Chinese New Year Sunday and Communion Sundays are most commonly used for financial appeals. Some churches call the special Sunday Consecration Sunday.

¹⁴ Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, p. 231.

¹⁵ Buck, J. L., *Chinese Farm Economy*, p. 390.

Fifty churches report that they canvass all their members for pledges and contributions. Some say that every-family canvass would be a better term than every-member canvass. Thirteen churches say definitely that they do not have such a canvass. A surveyor reports one preacher as saying that "he cannot get around to it." A few say that the churches do not make special appeals but wait for what the members are willing to bring.

In plans for training members in stewardship and giving, a large number of churches admit their failure. Twenty-four say they have no such plan and among the 30 churches which have some plan are many which feel the results are meagre. The training is mostly confined to occasional preaching on stewardship. One surveyor writes that there is "a lot of wind and energy wasted on the attempt." A few of the pastors are succeeding in linking up the duty and privilege of stewardship not only of money but also of land and labor with the whole educational and spiritual aim and program of the church.

The responsibility for soliciting funds, for collecting funds pledged, for keeping moneys, for paying out amounts needed and for keeping accounts is usually carried by various church officers, most often the treasurer and also the deacons, stewards or members of a finance committee. The pastor or preacher trains and helps. In 17 churches he is reported to be the chief treasurer or accountant. Frequently there are two treasurers, one to receive funds and keep accounts and the other to disburse funds; the two are a check on each other.

In 56 of the sample churches there is some kind of an audit of accounts, by persons elected by the local church, or by a committee of the presbytery, circuit or conference. Frequently the method of auditing is to post the accounts in detail where all can see them for a few weeks. Nine churches report that there is no audit of church accounts.

The whole problem of raising funds for the church through various methods, of keeping accounts, disbursing moneys and auditing accounts is much more than a matter of dollars and cents. It affords the finest kind of opportunity for educating members, lay-workers, church officers and the preacher himself in the purpose and meaning of the church and its work and the responsibility of every Christian to his church and community. For this reason con-

siderable space in this volume has been devoted to a study of the questions of finance and self-support in these rural churches.

(437) *Opinion of Pastor or Preacher and of Church Workers on Methods of Raising Funds and Achieving Self-Support.* The local church leaders were asked to check on a prepared list the methods which they plan to use, the methods considered most effective and those considered ineffective. The following table summarizes the opinions regarding different methods in 69 out of the 73 sample churches.

TABLE XX. OPINIONS OF 69 CHURCHES ON METHODS OF RAISING CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACHIEVING SELF-SUPPORT

		<i>Number of Churches</i>			
		<i>Using this method</i>	<i>Planning to use this method</i>	<i>Considering this method effective</i>	<i>Considering this method ineffective</i>
Annual pledges by members	60		4	44	3
Sunday offering					
(at church service)	56		3	40	1
Special offerings					
(Christmas, etc.)	50		8	30	
Thank offerings					
(Harvest Sunday, etc.)	32		19	27	2
Contributions of farm produce	15		16	23	3
Contributions of labor	32		6	29	4
Lord's Acre plan (members devoting produce of definite piece of their land to the church)	3		9	12	5
Definite tithe of income	11		9	11	11
Gifts to pastor of produce, etc.	7		4	5	7
Produce from land owned by church	14		1	9	4
Income from endowment fund	15		3	9	5
Rent of property	12		1	11	5
Animals or poultry raised by members for church	3		8	7	6
Financial campaign among non-Christians	3		3	2	18
Supplementary work by pastor	2		2	2	7

A study of the scores in the table above shows that annual pledges by members, Sunday offerings at the church service, and special offerings at church festivals or other times, are methods used and favored by the largest number of churches. Thank offerings at harvest time and contributions of labor are methods used in about half of the churches and are strongly favored. The use of labor which many poorer Christians can give more easily than cash is increasing. Several churches report pledges of days of labor for building of churches and for cultivation of church farms. One church (Church No. 30) reports the contribution of over 200 *kung* or days of labor on the part of 30 men for the building of a village chapel, the highest number given by one man being 34 and the lowest 1. In this case the pastor worked for two weeks along with the members. Some churches which now observe a harvest or thanksgiving Sunday in the autumn have a ceremony of presenting thanksgiving produce to the Lord. Both adults and children bring gifts which are placed in front of the church. They are later sold for cash or use in charity work.

The Lord's Acre plan is a new idea in China but churches which have tried it report unusually successful results. Opinions are naturally divided among churches which do not use or understand the method. Securing a tithe of all members' income is tried in a few churches but many who appeal for tithing feel that this is a difficult method. The farmer has to use so much of his produce for his own family and has so little cash margin that it is difficult to estimate a "tenth." Tithing also is thought of commonly in terms of money income whereas in rural China the members need to develop a sense of stewardship in the use of their land and labor as well. Gifts to the pastor of farm produce which cannot be counted on his salary are not common. There is a natural reluctance on the part of many preachers to depend in this way upon their members. Occasional gifts are welcome but most pastors would prefer to raise or buy the food products they need.

Crops from land owned by the church and worked by the labor of members and the raising of animals or poultry for the church by members are new methods which some churches are trying with considerable success. These methods are not checked to any great extent because many churches are not familiar with them and some disapproval is evidenced. But the movement for greater dedication

of labor to the church is growing and the writer would venture to prophesy that after ten years a much larger proportion of churches will be adopting and approving methods of "growing church money." Dr. Ralph A. Felton, an authority on the rural church in the U.S.A., who has been visiting professor at Nanking Theological Seminary for two years, is a strong advocate of such methods. "I am convinced," he says, "that the greatest financial need of the rural churches or pastors in China with which I have come in contact is to get a method for *growing* church money. . . . Some churches may come to self-support by being suddenly thrown upon their own financial resources, but a better practice undoubtedly is to teach the membership ways and means of caring for their church budget."¹⁸ Dr. Felton observed results of the new methods in some churches and worked out a plan which was being adopted in many other churches of east China when the war came. Christian business men in Shanghai, Nanking and elsewhere have contributed several hundred dollars to start a Rural Church Revolving Fund which would help rural churches start such self-support projects.

Part of the church property is rented out in about one-fifth of the churches for the sake of income but there is some criticism of this method of support. Fifteen churches have some form of endowment fund which brings annual interest. Often this is a fund which has been built up by member contributions and from which loans are made to members and friends of the church. Difficulties are frequently experienced in collecting these loans and several churches feel that the method is of doubtful value. Such an endowment or church land rented out for income is a very different thing from a church farm, orchard or handicraft project which is worked cooperatively by all the members of the church. Dr. Felton says of the latter plan, "A church farm tilled by the members themselves has every advantage. It increases the spirit of cooperation as the members work together instead of becoming a source of quarrels. It offers to those members without money a chance to contribute to their church by their labor. It increases people's interest in their church as well as increases the income for the church budget. In addition, a church farm provides an opportunity to try out some

¹⁸ Felton, R. A., "Growing Church Money, A Method of Self-Support for Rural Churches in China," in *Chinese Recorder*, LXVIII, 3, March 1937, 159-164.

new experiments in farm practice, and to introduce improved seeds."¹⁷

A financial campaign among non-Christians for contributions to the regular church budget has been tried in very few churches and most of them disapprove of the method. On the other hand, most churches approve of soliciting from non-Christian friends for community service projects. A later question (442) asked for definite opinions on this point. Fourteen churches approve soliciting non-Christians for contributions to the church, and 52 disapprove. Several of those who approve do so with qualifications, "if careful," "hope it will not be necessary, however." Some disapprove very strongly, "no use to try," "a dangerous practice," "it would raise serious problems." However, 48 churches favor asking non-Christians to give to service projects and only 10 disapprove. One of those who opposes says, "It is best for the church to handle these projects alone if possible." Some of those approving explain that the project should be one which definitely affects both Christians and non-Christians.

Supplementary work by the pastor or preacher is another method very little used. Some oppose it as a method of self-support and many feel it is impracticable for the minister to carry on two occupations. Supplementary work refers to work which brings regular income to the pastor and not to gardening, farming or other avocations.

6. *Achieving Self-Support*

(438) Pastors and church workers were asked by the surveyors what they considered the greatest advantages or disadvantages of working toward self-support. Many thoughtful answers were given.

The advantages mentioned may be summarized as follows: self-support encourages independence (14 replies); gives all members interest in and a feeling of responsibility for the church (14); is necessary to an indigenous Chinese church (5); makes the church stronger and more secure (5); disarms outside criticism of a "foreign" church (3); more freedom (2); develops the spiritual life of the members (2); glorifies God (1); "no advantages" (reply of one church leader discouraged and sour because mission grants had been suddenly withdrawn).

¹⁷ Felton, R. A., "Growing Church Money, . . ."

The disadvantages and difficulties mentioned are more varied: insistence on self-support seriously limits funds available for the program of the church (3); makes some churches want to be free from ecclesiastical system and control (3); keeps some Christians away from church and others from joining the church (3); money becomes the criterion of membership; takes too much time of the preacher; gives members too much power; members are not willing or ready for large measure of financial control; puts over-emphasis upon material side of church's work; irregular support of pastor; results sometimes in feeling of discouragement on part of church leaders; failures half-way; is apt sometimes to develop spiritual pride; lack of trained accountants and treasurers in rural churches; disputes over use of funds among church members; members become satisfied with the mere upkeep of the church and do not want a pastor. Although these answers are scattered yet they reveal many practical and psychological difficulties in the way of achieving self-support. These difficulties must be faced sympathetically, and with a wise and effective plan of nurture in the church and of training in the principles and methods of giving. Whatever policy is adopted it should be carried out in a way that will stimulate and encourage, not discourage, the pastors and other workers, and the members of the rural churches. Perhaps the best motive to appeal to is a sense of pride and responsibility and the hope of becoming a financially independent church which is still a part, however, of the larger church fellowship.

As the greatest encouragements in achieving self-support, the churches in the study mention: a very zealous elder who is a tither, the raising of 1,500 *yuan* for a new church, steady increase in proportion of preacher's salary paid by local church, growing interest and enthusiasm of members, the increasing contribution of land and labor to church work, the recovery after several years of disturbances and unrest in the community, the establishment with local funds of new branch churches, the raising of an endowment fund, spiritual revival together with increase in giving. Special difficulties reported include: poverty of many Christians, lack of a habit of regular giving, failure of a former endowment and loan fund, lack of interest on part of church officers, the spirit of dependence developed through years of very large mission subsidies, lack of a resident pastor to train members in stewardship, too few

THE CHURCH

members, quarrels over funds, lack of a definite plan or method, coldness of many Christians, members sure that mission will make up deficits, the farmer's lack of ready cash, economic conditions in the community.

(440) Sixteen churches favor self-support by contributions alone and 39 self-support by a plan which would combine contributions and income from some kind of endowment including a church farm worked by the members.

(439) The local leaders were asked the following questions, "If your church is not yet self-supporting, how soon do you think it may become self-supporting,

- (a) under lay-worker as responsible leader?
- (b) under a salaried preacher with elementary training?
- (c) under a salaried pastor or preacher with higher training (senior middle school and theological education or above)?"

(a) A number of churches are now under lay leadership and self-supporting as to current expenses with a circuit, mission group or church body giving supervision. Five other churches think they could be self-supporting in this way within 5 years.

(b) Fifteen churches discuss self-support under a resident preacher with elementary training. The estimate of time necessary varies from 3 to 15 years and averages 7 years. Many qualified their replies, "If there is a plan," "if we are guided," "it is a matter not of time but spirituality," "depends upon number of members."

(c) Self-support with a resident pastor of advanced training presents greater difficulties. Some churches have already reached this stage of self-support. Thirty-three others discuss the possibilities. Seven give indefinite answers, "Don't dare say," "Difficult to say," "uncertain," "far off," "never." The other 25 make estimates of time varying from 3 to 40 years, with an average of 12.

"Do you think that some subsidy from outside will always be necessary for a progressive rural church program?" Twenty churches reply "Yes," and 21 reply "No." Four think outside funds will be necessary for a community service program.

"What do you think is the minimum membership in order to achieve self-support under a well-trained resident pastor or preacher?" Forty-three churches answer this question with estimates varying from 100 to 1,000. Figures between 100 and 300 are

most commonly mentioned. The average number according to these 43 opinions is 330.

The writer has come to the conclusion, after visits to many rural churches and study of this whole problem, that if varied methods of self-support are introduced, including "growing church money," an ordinary parish of 200 members could support a well-trained pastor, provide for the upkeep of a central church and some village chapels, and carry on a simple but effective community program. But this parish would have to be limited in size in order to develop a church group consciousness, and education in the ideals and methods of giving to the church would have to be emphasized over a period of years. Mission or denominational help should be still available for such a church in the training of lay-workers, supervision of religious education and community service programs, and development of particular projects until they could become established with local support. The aim of rural churches in China should be, therefore, to work for a larger membership within a definite parish area; to have definite plans of financial support and give members training and inspiration in giving; to link improvement of rural life and raising of living standards with the support of the church; to develop the kind of church program which will meet real needs and enlist support on the part of church members and of the community; and to make use of a well trained leadership and constant pastoral guidance without which isolated groups of Christians and volunteer workers, no matter how earnest they are, are apt to become discouraged or to go backward in their Christian faith and life.

In closing this section it must be said again how important to the understanding of this problem is a clear definition of what is meant by self-support. A plan which deprives local congregations of any resident pastoral care may prove much more costly in the end for the mission or church body promoting the work. In the Siochang field of the London Mission referred to above, the cost to the mission of the large staff of travelling evangelists is about 7 *yuan* per church member, which is much higher than the cost per member in some other field where grants are given to aid local churches and where the proportion of local self-support is steadily increasing. Supervision and training as well as the local pastorate must be taken into consideration in determining how much of the responsibility

THE CHURCH

should be carried by the rural Christians themselves and how much by the founding and nurturing church bodies. Genuine progress and achievements in self-support are the criteria by which all theories and policies should be measured.

VI. CHURCH LIFE AND WORK

(PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH)

"The strengthening of the 'younger churches' must, of course, be more than a matter of numbers. Quality must be maintained and improved. Christianity spreads not alone through an increase in the census strength of its adherents, but also and chiefly from the quality of life that radiates from those who bear that name. A small group of devoted, intelligently earnest Christians may have a more striking effect on an entire people than a much larger body whose Christian profession is superficial. Yet there must also be numbers."¹

This section of the survey is a study of the life and work of rural churches; their preaching, teaching and worship; their nurture of members, inquirers and children; their mutual aid among Christians and their service to their communities; their extension to new centers; and their cooperation with other agencies, both local and national. What is the quality of life of these rural Christians? Are they growing in faith and character? Are they influencing the people of their communities? Is Christianity becoming rooted in their personal and group life?

The data selected for this volume have to do particularly with the work of Christian nurture or religious education in these churches.

The first questions asked the sample churches were with regard to their aims and programs of work.

(443) "Does the mission or denominational organization have a *definite plan for the church*?" Thirty-one surveyors (42 per cent) said "Yes," 31 said "No" and 11 did not reply. Some of the plans are plans of the circuit, conference or district association which include all churches; others are plans worked out by supervisors and the local leaders together and revised from time to time in the light

¹ Latourette, K. S., *Toward a World Christian Fellowship*, p. 55.

of developments. They include religious education and Bible study, literacy classes, extension evangelism, new methods of self-support, and community service projects. Some are quite simple, two or three objectives to work toward in the immediate future, other plans are very ambitious and comprehensive. The value of goals for rural churches on the part of the mission or denominational organization cannot be overestimated and it is serious that such a large number of churches are not being helped in their planning for the future.

"Does the local church itself have a plan for the present year or for a period of years?" A smaller number answered this question in the affirmative, 25. Some regional plans are not being applied locally. Thirty-four reply in the negative and 14 do not answer. The local plans also vary from a few very simple objectives to a detailed program for one, two or five years. Some churches sent copies of their plans. Goals set before a church cannot but stimulate and inspire both leaders and members. Twenty-four churches, about one-third of the total, mention definite new projects or experiments in which they are engaged.

(446) Surveyors were asked to indicate what *type of church or parish* they considered the one which they studied to be. One church was frequently given more than one description. Forty-three parishes were designated as rural community parishes, 32 as evangelistic centers, 17 as training centers for church members or lay-workers, 14 as experimental parishes, and 13 as rural reconstruction units. Three churches were put in all five classifications. Six surveyors did not reply to this question.

(447) "What has been the *policy of the church* in its approach to the community and the main methods used?" Sixty-eight replied to this question, by checking a prepared list.

Personal service	32
Community service	33
Friendship	45
Witness of Christians	51
Organization of village groups (literacy classes, cooperatives, etc.)	17
Direct preaching	58

Some churches are emphasizing more direct methods of evangelism and preaching at every opportunity; others stress the witness of

church members among their relatives and friends as the point of contact; and other churches use more of the indirect methods of personal and community service, friendship and village groups, to win friends, create confidence, demonstrate the spirit of Christianity and open doors for direct evangelistic effort. It is worthy of note that 10 of the 68 churches did not check "direct preaching" as their principal approach. The organization of village groups around some felt need, under local leaders but with some guidance, is proving a very effective approach in some parishes but is not widely used yet. The witness of Christians is considered almost as important as direct preaching. Several added a note that the majority of Christians had been brought into the church by the witness in word and life of Christian relatives and neighbors. Seven churches checked all of the six approaches.

(448) *Simple vs. Comprehensive Program.* Church workers in 17 out of 69 churches favor a "simple program of direct evangelism," while workers in 47 churches favor a "comprehensive and progressive program including evangelism, religious education and Christian social reconstruction." Five would like to see both programs merged. The large number who favor the comprehensive program is significant and shows the stirrings of new life and hope in the rural churches. Some of the surveyors commented upon the churches favoring the simpler program, "They know little else," "they don't understand their social connections and responsibilities," "there is a strong nucleus of young people who want the more comprehensive program but they are in the minority," "they have no conception of anything except direct preaching." Other churches while favoring the broader program admit the difficulties in realizing their hopes.

(449) *Difficulties.* "What are the chief difficulties in the way of carrying out a comprehensive and progressive program?" Fifty-three churches, chiefly those favoring the comprehensive program, answered this question, and checked a list of difficulties. Some added comments of their own. "Lack of adequate finances" was checked by 43 and "lack of trained leadership" by 39. Seven marked "unfavorable conditions within the church," and 6 "unfavorable location of church." Only one church felt that there was "antagonism or lack of interest on the part of the mission or denominational organization." One church marked "local opposition" as a difficulty.

Two churches said there was no great difficulty in carrying out such a program. One mentioned the presence of a self-styled "spiritual group" in the church as an obstacle and another the lack of interest on the part of the Christians themselves.

(450-451) *Extensive vs. Intensive Program.* Thirty-three churches (45 per cent) report that they are trying to cover all their area of work or parish with their present program, 10 that they are concentrating on certain sections particularly and 10 that they are concentrating on certain villages. Only four say that they are concentrating on certain classes of people in the community.

Ten churches (13.7 per cent of all studied) favor a policy of more extensive effort, 27 (36.9 per cent) favor a policy of more intensive effort, and 20 (27.4 per cent) believe that there should be both extensive and intensive effort. "The two are not mutually exclusive," "We must strengthen the church wherever we have a foothold," are characteristic comments.

Summary. The interest that these answers evidence in a more comprehensive parish program which shall reach the whole community but also influence more deeply certain sections and villages, is an encouraging sign. The serious difficulties in lack of trained leadership and sufficient funds are recognized. This means perhaps that changes in the methods of training rural ministers and reconsideration of the whole question of rural church finance are needed. A majority of the churches are ready to advance. Some are already making notable progress in the way of better religious education and community service. Encouragement and guidance are essential if these little Christian groups are to fulfill their mission to the rural communities of which they are a part.

PRESENT PROGRAM OF 73 SAMPLE RURAL CHURCHES

1. *Education*

Under this heading in the Survey Schedule come questions upon primary schools connected with the church, adult literacy schools (mass education), literacy institutes, other social education conducted by the church, reading room and library, study organizations promoted by the church, contacts or relations with non-Christian educational institutions, and boys and girls of the church who

are receiving secondary or higher education elsewhere. Summary of the data secured is omitted from this volume with the exception of important statistics upon primary schools.

A. *Primary Schools*

(452, 455) One-half of the rural churches studied, 37, have primary schools in connection with them. The total number of pupils is 2,417, the mean average per school being 65.3. The smallest number of pupils in one school is 9, the largest 164. Fifty-four per cent of the schools have an enrollment of less than 50 pupils.

Dr. Ida Belle Lewis' able study of 784 Christian primary schools in 1931, lower and higher primary, urban and rural, gave a mean average enrollment of 50.6. In her study which included many city schools there were 60.7 per cent boys and 39.3 per cent girls.² The Case Studies of Rural Churches show 70.8 per cent boys and 29.2 per cent girls. This preponderance of boys is characteristic of most rural schools in China.

The study of Christian education in China in 1921-1922 indicated that there were at that time 5,637 lower primary schools and 962 higher primary schools under Christian auspices, a total of 6,599.³ At least two-thirds of these were in rural China, probably between 4,000 and 4,500. Dr. Lewis made no estimate of the number of Christian primary schools in 1931 except to say that "despite the rapid decrease probably several thousand remain." The number of organized rural parishes similar to the samples studied in this Survey is perhaps around 5,000. If half of these have primary schools connected with them (and the percentage is probably 40 per cent) we can safely conclude that nearly one-half of the rural primary schools under church auspices have been closed within the past fifteen years. In some areas the proportion of schools closed since 1922 is much higher.

Rural primary schools have served in the past to meet a community need and to open doors of friendship for the church among the rural people. With the rising standards and costs of primary education it has been a question how much longer the church schools can exist and whether the money and energy de-

² *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact-Finders' Reports*, V, Part II, 615-654. "A Study of Primary Schools," by Ida Belle Lewis.

³ *The Report of the China Educational Commission, 1921-1922*, p. 61.

voted to them had better be diverted into adult education and a stronger program of religious education in the church. What contribution are these primary schools now making to the rural church, to the education of Christian children, and to the community as a whole? Are churches justified in continuing them when the government is assuming such great responsibilities for elementary education? The data from the schools connected with these sample churches should throw light on these questions and will be presented in a second volume.

2. *Religious Education*

A. *Literacy Education for Christians*

That illiteracy is a serious problem among rural Christians and inquirers has been shown by statistics in earlier sections of this volume.⁴ According to Buck's most recent survey not more than 50 per cent of the males and 2 per cent of the females in rural China have attended school at any time. Many have attended for only a few months or a year and when they are grown have forgotten how to read. The studies of sample churches show that not more than one-half of the church membership can read the gospels, the proportion among women being much lower. Some read but do not read intelligently and with understanding. The fact that more than one-half of the church members and an even larger proportion of inquirers cannot use their own Bibles and hymn books or read Christian literature is a very real obstacle in the way of a program of Christian nurture.

Missionaries and Chinese workers have recognized this problem and have made earnest efforts to teach reading in rural churches. The percentage of literacy is higher among Christian groups than among the general population. But aims and methods in literacy education have not been uniform and the results of such education show varying degrees of success. Some churches have held up much higher standards of literacy for their members than other churches; some have tried to give their members the knowledge which Christian citizens of the new China should have and others have been content with the teaching of a catechism or a few passages from the Bible.

⁴ See § 280, 292-299.

(401) The sample churches were asked whether they considered a literate membership a definite goal toward which to work. Fifty-four replied that they have such a goal, some emphasizing the fact, and a few saying that they aim to make only men or youth literate. Eight churches say literacy is not a goal. A smaller number, 41, state that they have a definite plan for teaching members, inquirers and their families to read; 17 have no definite plan or method.

The large majority of churches use the Chinese characters (ideographs) in teaching to read; 58 state that they use characters in literacy education, 14 use some form of phonetics and 5 teach romanization. The character and phonetics are sometimes taught together. Romanization is used chiefly in some sections of Fukien province.

Various stages and methods in literacy teaching were reported. Some churches use more than one plan. An analysis of the replies shows that the following methods are considered most important or effective: individual instruction by pastor or church officers and voluntary workers, 10; teaching Bible or Christian textbooks, 9; short-term literacy institutes or Bible conferences, 7; mass education schools, 6; one thousand character classes, 5; Sunday School classes, 4; instruction by Bible woman or woman evangelist, 3; primary school, 1; farm-study club, 1.

(402) One question brought to focus by the mass education or adult education movement in recent years, has been whether to help members and inquirers lay a foundation of general reading knowledge and then make use of Christian materials or whether to teach reading by means of Christian textbooks and the Bible from the beginning. The churches were asked which *methods* they use chiefly. Replies are summarized below:

(a) Teaching to read by means of literacy readers as basis for religious education; introducing religious material after period of literacy education. 7 churches.

(b) Literacy education by means of literacy readers and religious material taught together; religious material supplementing the general literacy material. 29 churches.

(c) Teaching to read entirely with use of religious material—Bible, religious textbooks, catechisms, etc. 41 churches.

Eleven churches report that they use both methods (b) and (c), with different groups. With older people, they say, the third method is the best.

(493) The comments on these methods bring out some interesting points of view. The churches which are teaching a phonetic system see the advantages of more rapid learning, especially for women. But in many sections of China the phonetics are not well known even among educated people or the forms are not suited to local dialect pronunciations. The Chinese character has the advantage of being an ideograph with the same meaning but different pronunciation according to the dialect region. Newspapers, magazines and most literature are published in Chinese characters. The teaching of romanization is limited to south Fukien where it has enjoyed wide use. But some surveyors report that Chinese leaders are opposed to further teaching of it, believing that the generally accepted Chinese characters should be taught. The majority of churches studied teach reading by means of religious material. The use of literacy readers such as those published by the Mass Education Movement, Mass Education Teachers' College at Wusih, or Association Press (Y.M.C.A.) is limited to less than half of the churches. Churches in north China have used mass education methods and materials to a much greater extent.

One of the most widely used texts for teaching the Chinese characters and Christian truth at the same time has been the series of four books, "Short Steps to Great Truths," by Dr. P. Frank Price.⁵ Total sales within the last forty years have reached more than a million copies. With the rise of the adult education movement many churches have started literacy schools or classes to study the "Thousand Character Texts" or other books which aim to give youth or adults a general reading knowledge. Religious material is used to supplement these texts or Christian books and the Bible is introduced to the pupil when he has completed the general readers. In recent years much Christian literature to meet such needs has been published.⁶

⁵ Price, P. Frank, *Short Steps to Great Truths*, Vols. 1, 2, 3 and 4 (Chinese). Religious Tract Society, Hankow.

⁶ The catalogue of the Christian Literature Society lists many books prepared in recent years for Christians and inquirers who have a reading knowledge of about 1,000 characters. *The Christian Farmer* magazine is edited for this group. The Rural Church Department of Nanking Theological Seminary has published elementary and advanced religious readers for use in rural churches, based also on a fundamental reading knowledge of a thousand characters: *Rural Religious Readers*, Elementary 3 vols., Advanced 6 vols. Christian Literature Society.

(493) "What are the *chief difficulties* in teaching illiterate members and inquirers to read?" The answers may be classified as follows:

- (a) Psychological difficulties in learning on part of adult pupils: dullness, poor memory, slow results, age. 21 churches.
- (b) Lack of interest or ambition to learn to read, lack of sense of need and hence of sufficient motivation. 13 churches.
- (c) Lack of sufficient time on part of learners, too great distance from church or teaching center, 17 churches; 2 churches.
- (d) Irregular attendance at literacy classes, lack of perseverance and failure to complete lessons. 12 churches.
- (e) Lack of teachers, or poor teaching. 7 churches.
- (f) Financial difficulties. 2 churches.

(494) Part of the data on general literacy classes and the contribution of the rural churches to mass education is included in the section on Community Service. But two *examples of literacy work* closely related to the program of religious education in the church may be briefly described here.⁷

The Paoting field of the American Board (Congregational) has put great emphasis upon mass education since 1924. Changteng (Church No. 4) is located in this field. Between 1924 and 1931 a total of 35,375 pupils were enrolled in the whole area, and 8,962 were graduated from literacy schools. During the same period nearly 2,500 new members were added to the churches, mostly youth from the literacy schools. The leaders were for the most part voluntary.

The Methodist Episcopal Church in the Changli (Hopei) area has also had a long history of mass education effort. In one church, Ankuochang, 400 youth and adult pupils were enrolled in 26 classes during a period of 5 years; in the same period 66 new members were added to the church.⁸

The adult education movement has not been as successful in its results in central and south China, whether promoted by government or by private agencies. A new method has been tried for four years in the Shunhwachen experimental parish of Nanking Theological Seminary (Church No. 30) which it is hoped might be better suited to conditions in these areas. Literacy teaching is combined with group and club activities. Farm-study clubs for men and

⁷ *The Church Literacy Movement*, a bulletin of the National Christian Council, Shanghai, 1930, contains reports of accomplishments in various regions.

⁸ Personal report of the former pastor, Rev. Tien Lih-kung.

home-study clubs for women are organized in villages, in rooms given or loaned for the purpose. The usual membership is 15 to 20. The club has its advisers, teachers, and officers. During the four winter months there is a nightly meeting for study and on Saturday evening a club meeting. During the other months of the year the club organization and spirit is maintained by monthly meetings. Graduates continue to be members of the club. There are other activities within the groups and service projects for the village. Once in the fall and once in the spring joint meetings of all the village clubs and club members are held. Teachers and leaders are given training and supervision. All local expenses are met by the club. The church or other supervising agency secures books and sells or loans them and provides for general overhead expenses. In the spring of 1937 there were 12 village clubs with 175 members who attended regularly. The membership in previous years had been 9, 66, and 151. In 1937, 37 members were promoted from the elementary to the advanced group. Each club has a banner and learns the club motto and songs. In one village the membership of the club is drawn largely from an old village worship organization. The village leaders are mostly Christians or inquirers but the membership is drawn more from non-Christians. Through club songs, lectures, supplementary teaching material and activities Christian teaching is easily introduced. As a result more than half of the new members of the church in recent years have come from these clubs whose members are mostly from 16 to 40 years of age. Many new Christians have learned to read in these clubs and Christians or inquirers who can read find that teaching in these groups is a fine way to serve the church and the community. The average expenses of one club for a year are about 10 *yuan*.⁹

B. *Preparation of Inquirers* (also catechumens, probationers) *for Membership in the Church.*

(496) The *Chinese terms* used in the sample churches for inquirers and those preparing for church membership are:

- a. *Mu-tao-yu*, a common name for inquirer, meaning "one who longs for or seeks the Truth." This term is used in 37 churches.

⁹ For a full account of the experiments with Farm-Study clubs, see *Shunhwa-chen Rural Training Center of Nanking Theological Seminary*, Bulletin of Rural Church Department, especially the Chinese edition. (1936, 1937.)

b. *Hsueh-yu* or *Hsueh-tao*, meaning "learner" or "student of the Truth." The former term is used by 19 churches, the latter by 3. The English equivalent is frequently "probationer."

c. *Wang-tao-yu*, another term for inquirer, meaning "one who looks for or hopes for the Truth," used by 7 churches.

d. Scattered terms; *Chi-min-tih*, "one enrolling his name," by 2 churches; *t'ing-yu* or "listener," by 3 churches; *lih-yoh-tih*, "one who makes a covenant," by 1 church; *shih-yu*, "probationer," by 1 church; *hwei-lü*, "companion" by 1 church; *hsi-tao-yu*, "one who practices the Truth," by 1 church.

An inquirer may be given one name when he first becomes interested and another when he definitely decides to be a Christian and enrolls for study, according to the plan of some churches.

(497) "*How are inquirers enlisted and enrolled?*" In some churches these who become interested in Christianity and begin to attend worship services are counted as inquirers. "Everyone knows who they are," says one surveyor. In other churches there is more definite recognition of those who become inquirers, probationers or catechumens and a more formal process of enrolling them. Children of Christian families are admitted to the church when they apply for baptism or full membership and after certain tests. New inquirers are counted or enrolled in the following ways: those who listen frequently to the gospel and attend church services regularly (24 churches); by definite enrollment of those who are willing to sign their names or make a pledge (20 churches); through personal influence and introduction of other Christians (18 churches); through personal influence or efforts of church leaders (12 churches); through voluntary expression of belief or desire to be Christian on part of individuals (9 churches); by appeals for decision after evangelistic meetings (5); those who come for examination before church session or board (3).

(498) The churches mention various *qualifications* or kinds of experience which they expect of persons enrolled as inquirers. Regular attendance at services leads the list (30 churches). Nineteen mention willingness to join a class or to begin study of Christian truth, 12 some evidence of repentance and new life. In 16 churches a sincere, earnest and manifest purpose to be a Christian is the main qualification. Eight churches mention good character and the giving up of bad habits, 7 mention the giving up of superstitions. Other churches expect only a purpose to learn and a willingness to

try the Christian way in fellowship with members of the church. Larger numbers of inquirers are sometimes reported by churches which count all persons coming with fair frequency to church, whether they have expressed a definite purpose to seek baptism or not. Two churches reported that they have no definite qualifications for inquirers. The answers here are similar to those in the survey of inquirers (§290).

(499) The churches vary greatly as to *plans for training inquirers* from time of enrollment to admission into the church. Six churches report that there is no plan, the majority mention various kinds of training and a few give very detailed methods. In the London Mission churches of the Siaochang area (Church No. 26, for example) a regular Covenant Course and Baptismal Course is used; copies were sent with the survey material. Two Sheng Kung Hui churches report very definite stages in the training of the inquirer, each with certain length of time; the training is carried on after baptism for several months until the time of confirmation. Sheng Kung Hui churches distinguish between baptized and communicant Christians. A total of 14 churches report that they use certain courses of study for inquirers prescribed by their denomination or church group. One course, sent by a Lutheran church in Hunan (Church No. 7) is a detailed outline of doctrines which the inquirer should understand, Bible passages which he should learn, hymns which he should be able to sing or read, and church responsibilities which he should begin to bear. Nineteen churches mention the use of certain Bible portions or passages in training, 15 report inquirers' classes of different kinds, 11 expect regular attendance at church services as part of the training program, 12 mention catechisms in teaching Christian doctrine. Other methods reported by a small number of churches are: use of Christian textbooks, teaching of hymns, training in Christian experience and character, personal guidance, giving practice in witnessing and serving. Most of the churches have some form of examination or test before admitting inquirers to membership but 8 mention examinations specifically as a method of training. In one church (Church No. 61) the names of those approved for membership are announced three weeks before the service of Holy Communion. If there is any objection to a name, it is reconsidered.

The *period of training or probation* also varies in length accord-

ing to the methods of training and standards required for admission to the church. The trend is toward longer periods of preparation and greater care in receiving new Christians. One-half of the sample churches require one year or more of training and testing; 29 report one year, 6 report two years or longer. One church (Church No. 58) is very strict and says that sometimes inquirers are kept waiting for many years before they are baptized. Sixteen churches say that six months is the minimum time necessary for training, and 4 give one to three months as the minimum. In 15 churches there is no definite period of probation but each case is considered on its merits. Although a certain time is set as the minimum many churches add that it may be longer when the inquirer makes slow progress in his Christian knowledge and experience.

(500) Only 4 churches say that they require an inquirer to win his family to Christian faith before he can be received into membership. Nineteen say that this is expected or urged but not required. Eleven churches answer "not necessarily," and 35 churches answer "No," an inquirer is not required or expected to win his family. The small proportion of Christians to a family in some parishes may be due to the lack of emphasis upon making the inquirer's whole family Christian.

(501) In 28 churches, about one-third, there are regular *training classes* of some kind which include inquirers. Five churches report special inquirer schools at some period in the year and 3 mention Bible classes or Sunday School classes for inquirers. Thirty say they have no regular classes. In many churches pastors and church officers give considerable individual attention to inquirers but do not try to organize them in classes. Thirty-three churches report enrollment of inquirers in various kinds of classes; two-thirds report 20 or less enrolled, and the average enrollment is about 30. This is much less than the average of 80 inquirers per church which is reported in a previous section. Evidently it is easier to enroll inquirers and to give them individual instruction than it is to organize them into regular classes for study. Twenty-six churches, about one-third, report a "special period of intensive training, a catechumen class, before baptism or reception into the church." Several churches who do not give intensive training before baptism think that they should do so.

(502) All but one of the churches report that there is some kind

of oral *examination or testing of inquirers* before they are baptized or admitted to church membership. In 42 churches this is done by the pastor or evangelist, and sometimes by the district superintendent, visiting pastor or missionary. In 26 churches there is an examination by the pastor or evangelist and the church officers or committee who decide whether the inquirer may be received into membership. Two churches report that all communicant members vote upon the admission of new members. The examination is often just an interview between the pastor and the inquirer and includes also an investigation into the character and home life of the applicant. Forty-six churches say that they require sponsors or a recommendation from other members before an inquirer can be baptized; 16 do not have such a requirement. The number of sponsors varies from one to 4 or 5.

(503) Naturally all who are enrolled as inquirers do not finally join the church. There is considerable elimination. Sixty-four churches reported statistics as to the number of inquirers enrolled within the previous two years and the number received into membership during that time. The totals are:

Enrolled as inquirers in previous two years	2,440
Applied for church membership in same time	887
Admitted to membership in same time	1,065

The reason that the number applying for baptism and membership is less than those received is because enrollment as inquirers is frequently considered as an application. But the figures show that less than half the number enrolled or apply are received. Some are rejected, some lose their interest, some are kept waiting until their faith and character are better proven.

(504) After the period of training and probation the inquirer, if he meets the tests of his church, is baptized or admitted to full membership in the little Christian rural society. The *requirements for admission to the church* may be grouped under five heads:

(a) Literacy. Nineteen of the sample churches report some kind of literacy requirement, such as ability to read simple Christian books or the catechism, or ability to read the gospels. Some say the requirement applies only to younger members. One church says emphatically, "Unless there is a special reason illiterates under 27 may not receive baptism." A few churches require attendance for a certain time in a literacy class, but the majority have no definite

literacy requirement although many hope and expect that the inquirer will learn to read some before his baptism. One church answered that literacy is an "unimportant qualification."

(b) Motives. The emphasis in the answers is upon pure and sincere motives. Negatively this means that there should not be a desire to live off of the church or to get special benefits or protection from the church. Positively the new convert should give evidence of a real desire for salvation and for joining a Christian group. His action should be spontaneous not forced.

(c) Christian experience. The answers emphasize the need of a beginning of Christian experience before baptism. Most of the replies stress personal experience—salvation, second birth, prayer, peace of heart, sense of forgiveness, perseverance. Some mention experiences of a changed life, of love and of service that should be expected.

(d) Christian knowledge. An elementary knowledge and understanding of essential Christian truths is expected of the new church member in most churches. Some make use of catechisms; others select certain passages from the Bible as the Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer, Beatitudes, I Corinthians chapter XIII, to be memorized. Others expect more Biblical knowledge—outline of life of Jesus, important parables and teachings, Bible stories. The liturgical churches and some others teach forms of prayer and public worship to inquirers before baptism and many teach hymns. The convert is generally expected to know the meaning of the sacraments but little is taught about the history of the church in China and in the world. Few answers indicate that much knowledge of Christian ethics on fundamental questions of home, group and social relationships is required. Several replies mention the practical difficulties in the way of teaching the inquirer very much before his baptism. The important thing, these churches say, is proved sincerity of purpose, willingness to learn and the beginnings of Christian knowledge and experience.

(e) Christian character. Most of the churches state that evidence of good, upright character, is an essential qualification for membership. "There should be at least a determined beginning to live as a Christian." Several churches require that Christian relatives or neighbors witness to the changed life of the convert. Christian habits of prayer, witnessing, church attendance, peaceableness, service to others, helping the work of the church, should be begun. The churches were asked, "What non-Christian practices or customs is the applicant for membership expected to give up?" No list was given to check but most of the churches mentioned several things. Idolatry, superstitions and all superstitious practice in the home, in temples or connected with festivals, were mentioned by the largest number, 44. Gambling was mentioned by 26 churches, "bad habits and vices of all kinds" by 17, opium-smoking by 12, wine-drinking by 11, worship of ancestors by 10. Practices mentioned less than

ten times include: sexual immorality, lying and deceit, quarrelling, cursing and reviling, smoking, foot-binding, keeping future daughter-in-law in the home, keeping slave girls. Evidently the leaders of these rural churches feel that the outstanding difference between the non-Christian and Christian is in the matter of worship. To become a Christian one must renounce all the popular religious beliefs and practices in home, society and temple, and worship in the Christian way. Gambling is the most serious social evil to be renounced. The other forms of bad behavior to be given up are what would be called serious sins. Only three churches mention the smoking of cigarettes as something to be dropped although perhaps a larger number would have checked it in a list. That so few mention lying and deceit, quarrelling and reviling may indicate that a change in disposition is taken for granted or that these sins are not considered as serious as some others.

(506) Special ceremonies in connection with the *reception of new inquirers* make the occasion more significant for the inquirer and his friends. Thirty churches in the group studied have such ceremonies; a pledge and public reception, enrolling definitely as inquirer before the congregation, standing and being introduced to the members, announcement of names and special prayer, a special certificate, and other forms. The other churches have no special recognition of the inquirer but a few comment that there should be such ceremonies to make the occasion impressive and strengthen the inquirer in his decision. One church has a special service in the home of the new inquirer at which time he formally takes down or destroys all idols, paper gods and other forms of superstitious worship in his home and when the inquirer makes a declaration of his purpose to study the Christian way to his relatives and neighbors.

(505, 506) The *reception of new members* into the church is according to the usual form of the different denominations, with a public confession of faith before the congregation, baptism by sprinkling or immersion, and in many churches a welcome on the part of the other members. In some churches this ceremony is rather casual and poorly administered. But a number of churches report that the ceremony is dignified and impressive. There is no indication yet of any special adaptation of the baptism and admission ceremony to rural congregations. The giving of some form of certification of baptism and membership is more common now; thirteen churches report this practice. The Foochow Methodist Conference has recently prepared a special certificate for its churches to

give new members. Five churches give Bibles; one gives "some book," and one gives a small cross for the home to each new communicant.

(507) A complete list of all the books, outlines and other materials used by these sample churches in the training of inquirers would cover several pages and would be of interest chiefly to church leaders in China. The materials may be classified into the following groups:

a. Catechisms, used in 35 churches (about one-half). A great variety of these is mentioned.

b. Textbooks for inquirers, and outlines of study for inquirers. Some of these are published by the Christian Literature Society or other publication societies; some are prepared for denominations and a few outlines are used simply in one region or church. Mentioned by 30 churches.

c. Bible or portions of the Bible—special passages, verses for memorization, Bible stories, the Ten Commandments and Lord's Prayer—mentioned by 29 churches.

d. Hymns and songs and choruses, listed as teaching material for inquirers by 9 churches.

e. The Apostles' Creed, taught in 4 churches.

f. Other materials used in a few churches: Sunday School lesson sheet, tracts, health material, Life of Jesus.

Since not more than 40 per cent of inquirers can read the Gospels and not more than one-half even simple catechisms, much instruction has to be done orally. But a definite plan of oral instruction and of guidance in learning to live the Christian life is often lacking. There is a danger that the church workers and the inquirers may be satisfied with the inquirer learning to repeat the words of a catechism or other book or some doctrinal formulae without much perception on his part of their meaning and application to life.

(509) The churches were asked what they considered the *greatest difficulties or obstacles* in getting friendly or interested persons to enroll as inquirers. There are always many people in a community who seem to favor Christianity and are on good terms with the church but who will not or do not definitely associate themselves with the Christian group. The replies dealt with the obstacles on the part of these friendly persons which must be overcome, the most common being: fear of ridicule, difficulty of breaking family, clan and social ties, difficulty of breaking with ancestor

worship, unwillingness to give up non-Christian religious beliefs or practices, unwillingness to cast off certain bad habits or amusements, family opposition, lack of real religious interest, reluctance to be bound by church organizations and forms and to make an "irrevocable commitment." Less frequent but very significant answers are: "the church lacks social status," "many persons are more interested in the social activities of the church than in personal religion," "suspicion of the church as a foreign organization," "the pastor does not lead friendly persons to make definite decisions," "some people think that because they cannot read they cannot be Christians," "unworthy members in the church," "real prejudice or hostility under apparent friendliness," "lack of understanding of real meaning of Christianity," "the usual attitude: it does not matter to which religion one belongs and after all a change is a bit of a nuisance."

(510) But after a person has become an inquirer and has prepared for church membership what obstacles does he face? Family opposition is still his greatest difficulty if he is the first Christian in the home. Breaking with certain family customs and clan ties causes a wrench. For this reason some churches wait longer before baptism in the hope that the inquirer's family may be won and he will have the reinforcement of his immediate social group. Fear of ridicule and persecutions by friends and neighbors, the renouncing of beliefs and practices supported by his group, the demands of the church upon his time and money, cause many inquirers to hesitate before baptism. Some churches report that many more inquirers would like to be baptized than are received. Only those who can be trained and meet certain standards are admitted. The obstacle here is the inability of the church to give the needed care to those who seek admittance.

(511) This leads to the *difficulties and problems in the training of inquirers*. Many churches feel these keenly and the most frequently mentioned are: lack of sufficient teachers, illiteracy, ignorance and economic difficulties of inquirers, irregular attendance at classes, lack of time for regular study, the family and clan organization which makes it difficult for one member to stand out as a Christian, lack of good materials and methods which will arouse and hold the inquirer's interest and help him to grow in faith and Christian experience.

The writer's conclusion after this study of inquirer training is that standards for entrance to the church are higher than formerly and that more attention is being given to the preparation of these seekers for membership in the Christian family. Some churches are using steps in training and carefully planned methods which other churches might well emulate. The difficulties in a program of Christian education for rural inquirers just moving out from their non-Christian environment and associations into the Christian fellowship must be recognized. But a few churches are showing unmistakably that the whole level of this program could be lifted. For one thing, the possibilities in use of more mature Christians to help in training of inquirers and new Christians has hardly been touched. The work need not all be centered at the church. Home and village study groups, special periods of training, better methods of oral instruction and frequent individual counselling and direction by the church leaders and officers, would greatly strengthen this phase of religious education in the rural churches of China. The writer and his associates in the Rural Church Department of Nanking Theological Seminary have prepared an outline of objectives and methods in training of inquirers, based upon these and other studies, which was published in booklet form and also in the Nanking Seminary Review.¹⁰

C. *Training of Church Members and Their Families.*

(512) Forty-nine churches (67 per cent) report that they have a definite plan of some kind for regular instruction and training of church members, individually or in groups. Thirteen say that they have no plan and the rest do not answer the question. The method most commonly mentioned as part of a plan for nurture of Christians is the Bible class or Sunday School (22 churches). Fourteen churches say that they instruct their members through the regular services, 12 mention special schools or classes of one week or more, 10 pastoral visitation. Family worship, prayer meetings, special meetings for women, revivals, Methodist class meetings, training through witness and service, special evening meetings for teaching, and the use of literature are each mentioned less than ten times. Some of these teaching activities are no doubt carried on in a large

¹⁰ *Nanking Seminary Review*, March-April, 1937. A small text based on these studies prepared by Rev. Chu Chin-ih of the Shunhwachen Rural Training Center, was published by the Rural Church Department and is being tried in inquirer classes in several churches.

number of churches but the ones here are reported as part of a definite program of member-training. Several churches recognize their weakness in this phase of work by such replies as, "No such program, alas! Our members are too scattered," "There is little contact with Christians outside of Sunday services," "We lack a program of teaching—this is our weakness." Some churches report regular teaching work on Sundays and other days and a special type of teaching given in training institutes or classes in the times when members are free. Two churches report interesting experiments in a "unified Sunday program," including teaching of hymns, graded classes, worship, preaching and social fellowship, but with emphasis upon the educational method throughout. More detailed questions were asked upon different aspects and methods of the nurture of church members and their families and the answers are summarized below.

(513) (a) *Care of New Christians.* Many churches do not give serious consideration to the care and training of the new convert after he has been baptized. Fourteen churches say they have no plan. Most of the others report only the ordinary visitation, individual guidance, classes and preaching planned for all the members. The Methodist churches, especially English Methodist, put the new Christian immediately into a "class meeting" where certain older Christians take definite responsibility for him. The Anglican churches prepare the baptized Christian for the next step of confirmation. One church reports a careful plan of visiting the new Christians and of helping them in their special difficulties; another says each one is assigned to an older church member or officer. The encouragement and strengthening of the new Christian is very important during his first year, especially if he has come from a non-Christian family or village.

(514) (b) *Bible Classes for Church Members.* Half of the churches, 38, report regular Bible classes. Most of these meet at the church, on Sundays and week-days and sometimes in the evenings; a smaller number meet in branch chapels and in homes. The pastor usually is the leader but several churches have classes led by officers or lay-workers. The enrollment in two-thirds of the classes is 20 or less. Some book of the Bible is generally the material for study; a few classes use special outlines prepared by the denomination or the Christian Endeavor Manual. In one church the members of the

THE CHURCH

class follow daily Bible readings, and there is a meeting of the class each day. Where the class is held at the church the attendance is usually limited to members nearby. Bible classes held in villages and homes enroll many more distant members. Nearly half of the churches report no regular Bible classes during the year. A few churches in the group are especially active in promoting Bible study:

Church No. 10. Twelve home Bible classes, each with 20 members enrolled and average attendance of 15.

Church No. 34. Five classes for men, two for women, two for girls and one for boys. Average attendance 70. Led by class leaders ("local preachers"). Text: "Methodist Manual for Church Leaders."

Church No. 43. Each branch church has Bible class every evening. Average attendance in each about 10, sometimes 40. Classes led by elders and deacons, using the Bible. Christians are making great progress.

Church No. 55. Eight classes in villages and homes, with enrollment of 186 and average weekly attendance of 154. Leaders: pastor and assistants, officers and members. Very good results in better understanding of Bible and in strengthening of faith of members.

Church No. 56. Girls' League Bible Class, attendance 25, members take turns leading; men's Bible class, average attendance 20, lay-leaders, studying Acts; boys' Bible class in primary school.

(515-523) (c) *Church Sunday School*. Fifty (or 68.5 per cent) of the 73 sample churches report Sunday Schools. Thirteen say they do not have Sunday Schools and the rest do not reply. Most of these Schools are held at the church center; a few make use also of primary schools or other buildings connected with the church. Three churches report Sunday Schools held in branch churches or chapels. All but one of the Schools are held on Sunday, usually in the morning, before the worship service. Some are held following the worship service and a few in the afternoon. One school is held during the week.

The pastor or other paid workers are superintendents in 20 Sunday Schools, primary school teachers in 13, lay-workers or church members in 10, church officers in 5. Occasionally women evangelists or school teachers hold this position.

One-half of the Schools have only one class, 25 report two or more classes. The average number of classes per School is a little over two. The highest number of classes is six, reported by 7 churches.

Of the teachers of classes 61 per cent are church members, 10 per cent are primary school teachers and the rest are salaried workers in the church.

Forty-four churches report the average attendance of their Sunday Schools. The average for all the Schools is 76, with a range of from 15 to 300, depending to a considerable extent upon the size of the church membership. This is just about the average number of members who attend church fairly regularly (see 281); about 64 per cent of the average church membership and 38 per cent of the average number of members and inquirers per church. However, if churches which do not have Sunday Schools are included as well as those which have, the average of Sunday School attendance and the percentage of all members attending is much lower. For all the churches studied the average Sunday School attendance is only 46, or one-third of the average membership and a little over one-fifth of the average number of members and inquirers.

Children are found in 44 of the 50 Schools reported and 7 Schools consist only of children. Children (under 16) account for 48 per cent of the total attendance in Schools reported, youth (16-25) for 21 per cent, and adults (over 25) for 31 per cent. Classified in another way, 53 per cent of those who attend are church members, 35 per cent are inquirers and 12 per cent are non-Christians. Children are included in all the groups. Evidently not many non-Christian adults attend Sunday Schools.

The Sunday School program as reported by most of the rural churches is of the orthodox type introduced by missionaries from the West—hymn, prayer, Scripture reading, class teaching, assembly, closing exercises. Too often it seems to be merely an abbreviated form of the longer worship service and the teaching, especially where there is only one class, is mostly preaching. In the Shunhwachen experimental parish (Church No. 30) a unified Sunday morning service has been used for two years: teaching of new hymns (15 minutes), six classes (30 minutes), worship period (20 minutes), sermon (30 minutes), offering, notices, reports from village groups, exchange of news, fellowship period (15 minutes). Attendance at the study period has increased and is now 80, or nearly two-thirds the total number of Christians and inquirers. One-half of the pupils are children and youth and one-half are adults. Of the fifty Sunday Schools reported all but six are held

THE CHURCH

every Sunday throughout the year; the few that are closed during summer or winter vacations are generally connected with primary schools.

The fifty churches with Sunday Schools report on curriculum materials used:

Uniform or Graded Sunday School lesson sheets, published by Sunday School Union, Baptist Publication Society or Chengtu Press	28
National Committee on Christian Religious Education, newer type of graded materials	17
Bible alone	10
Other books or materials	8

Some Schools are using more than one type of material in different classes. The Schools with larger proportion of children are using more of the National Committee for Christian Religious Education materials or Neighborhood Sunday School Lessons prepared by the Religious Education Department of Nanking Theological Seminary.

The lecturing method prevails, being mentioned by 39 churches. Question and answer methods are mentioned by 37, discussion methods by 16, activities connected with the classes by 10, and study together by 5. Eight churches report that interest in the Sunday School is strong, 29 that there is a fair degree of interest, and 8 that interest is weak.

The chief problem or difficulty felt by these Schools is the lack of good, trained teachers; this is mentioned 23 times. Other difficulties listed: lack of interest and irregular attendance by 11 churches; lack of suitable materials, 6; building and equipment not suitable 6; adult members will not attend, 6; insufficient funds, 5.

Summary. This picture of the rural Sunday School is not quite as discouraging as that painted by Dr. W. A. Anderson in his report on the rural church in China.¹¹ A considerable number of churches, with the help of better trained pastors, supervisors or denominational leaders, are trying to improve their Sunday Schools. But in more than half of these sample churches, there is no Sunday School or the School has only one class and is merely another preaching service. The average attendance is small compared with the total number of members and inquirers. It is difficult to get adults to

¹¹ *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact-Finders' Reports*, V, Part II, 197.

attend and children predominate in many Schools. Some new materials are being introduced but the older methods of lecturing with occasional questions prevail in most churches. There is a sad lack of volunteer teachers. Traditional western forms have been followed too much in organization and administration. With a few exceptions the interest in the Sunday School and its work is not strong. The writer believes that much more attention must be given to preparation of materials especially suited to rural Sunday Schools and to training of volunteer teachers. Also that the study period must be integrated into the entire Sunday program so that members, inquirers and their families will realize more clearly its importance. Under rural conditions not all teaching can be done in the Sunday School or study period of the Sunday program. But more could be done and it could be done more effectively.¹²

(523) (d) *Study Hour Before or After Church Service.* In some churches, though there is no organized Sunday School, yet the time before or after the church service is used for some teaching and study. Six such churches report a regular period for teaching of hymns, 5 a time of informal instruction, and 5 the memorizing of Scripture verses or of the catechism.

The most interesting use of both morning and afternoon time for study is in an independent church at Shiherhpa (Church No. 65). Here members come, the women often on wheelbarrows, to spend a good part of Sunday. The program begins with a prayer meeting, followed by the teaching service. After a meal together the Christians divide into many Bible classes. Then there is a more formal Sunday School followed by a Christian Endeavor Society meeting.

(525) (e) *Reading or Study Schedule for Individual Members.* A small number of churches are attempting to guide the reading and study of their members during the week. Six report some kind of a plan of reading, 3 are using a book of daily Bible readings, a few Methodist churches in Fukien are using a Four-year Movement booklet for Christians prepared by the Conference. Two churches report examination of progress in Bible reading and home study

¹² A critical but fair discussion of religious education in the Chinese church is found in the essay, "Religious Education," by Dr. T. H. P. Sailer in *Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Fact-Finders' Reports*, V, Part II, especially the section on religious education in the church, pp. 302-326. Dr. Sailer emphasizes the needs for better materials, better teaching methods, and more creative experimentation in the type of Sunday Schools and classes suited to the Chinese church.

given to their members, one on communion Sundays and another once every month. One church reports a circulating library and two the circulation of magazines which they try to get their members to read. The Bahsua church (Church No. 62) on an island off Fukien gives many of the men who are members Testaments and other books to read on their long fishing trips. A reading schedule for literate Christians would probably stimulate more home reading and study but has been tried by only a few rural churches.

(526) (f) *Christian Endeavor*, Epworth League or other young people's or adult societies for worship, study and discussion, in which members take active part. Twenty-one churches (29 per cent) report such organizations. Most of them make use of the *Christian Endeavor Manual* or similar books of topics and materials. The interest is generally good, since members take part, often greater than in Bible classes and Sunday Schools. Attendance varies, and in some churches, is limited to women. Often only the older members take part. Several churches feel that topics and programs more suited to rural Christians are needed and many who do not have such organizations feel the need of them but say that a suitable time and the distance of many members from the church presents serious obstacles.

(527) (g) *Men's and Women's Organizations in the Church*. Such organizations, common in the churches of America, are reported in few of the sample churches. In many Bible classes, Sunday School classes and church activities, men and women divide, but a special organization for each with officers and program is not often found. Ten churches tell of special societies for women and seven of societies for men, chiefly for purposes of evangelism. These meet every Sunday or sometimes once a month. Special youth organizations are described in a later section.

(527) (h) *Small Group Meetings in Homes and Villages for Study, Fellowship, Worship and Service*. "To what extent is a definite plan of Christian nurture through scattered group meetings being carried out?" Thirty-seven churches, about half the total number, describe some kind of group meetings outside of the church building for teaching-learning purposes. These are usually held in village homes, and are led by the pastor or other church worker or by local Christians. One church reports that the members of the

parish are divided into 18 small groups which meet regularly in their own areas. Another church reports meetings once a week in 30 homes, with more than 200 members taking part. The surveyors say that many church workers testify to the value of such religious teaching distributed through the parish if sufficient local leaders can be found and if they can be given good direction and supervision. The meetings take place most frequently in the evenings, and sometimes in the afternoons. The programs vary from definite study and discussion to a simple prayer service with some reading of the Bible and exposition.

(528) (i) *Training through Experiences, Projects and Service Activities.* "If members are given an opportunity to preach, witness, teach, help in work of the church, visit with pastor, take part in community service, with educational purpose and under guidance, describe briefly how such training is organized and directed." Perhaps the emphasis upon educational aim and method kept a number of churches from replying to this question, which sought information on what the rural Christians are learning by doing. Twenty-one churches mention evangelistic bands going out on Sundays or especially at the Lunar New Year season, to witness in homes and villages. Some of this work, the surveyors report, is very effective. It is a question to what extent it is carefully directed. Fifteen churches report that the pastor or evangelist takes members with him when he visits in his parish to give them training and experience. No doubt many churches use their members in various forms of service, but only five describe these service projects as educational in purpose. In only a small number of the churches studied do the members seem to be given well-planned opportunities of service and to be learning through such activities.

(529) (j) *Normal Classes for Teachers.* Normal training of voluntary teachers is exceedingly difficult in rural churches. Only eight report normal classes or meetings to discuss teaching materials and methods weekly and these are mostly in churches with primary schools attached. One church reports a monthly class and one a training class each year for teachers. Help to voluntary teachers must be given individually and by methods of supervision rather than in formal classes.

(530) *Religious Drama.* Thirty churches report that they have presented some kind of religious drama in recent years. The drama

is always popular in China and city and rural churches have made use of it at times both in Christian and non-Christian gatherings. The largest number of plays reported are in connection with Christmas or other Christian festivals and are usually given by pupils of the primary school. Dramas presented by members of the church or students of literacy schools are reported by eight churches. In five churches outside groups of students, from a seminary, and from Christian middle schools, have given a program of religious drama. Home Week plays are mentioned by two churches, a play by officers and teachers by one, and a play by kindergarten children by another. These drama are usually a simple performance of some Bible story or of the Christmas and Easter story. The "Girl's League" in a Fukien rural church presented a play, "The Real Presence" at Easter time. The results vary. Some churches say that results are only fair, one says "not very good," and another reports that a religious drama performed by local Christians a few years ago attracted a large crowd and stirred up local opposition. The dramas have sometimes been on the subject of health, citizenship or the foolishness of superstitions. If local customs are held up to ridicule in such a performance there is apt to be feeling or opposition. Other churches, however, report that the dramas have been successful, attracting many who would not otherwise be interested and making a deep impression upon the audience. The writer has seen Christian student groups dramatize the story of the Prodigal Son in a way that held a crowd for two hours and moved many to tears. Some churches replying oppose the use of drama in the church building, others oppose it on general grounds as not a wise or right method of evangelism. There are no doubt great possibilities in the use of religious drama in rural churches or in connection with Christian rural service but study and experiment are needed to discover the kind of simple but also educative and inspiring dramas which will be most effective. A few churches make use of dialogues and very simple dialogue plays in connection with New Year evangelism or special evangelistic meetings. The Mass Education Movement produced many plays which can be performed by village youth. Good religious dramas and dramas teaching health, cooperation, patriotism and service are needed. These should be simple enough for performance without elaborate staging or costume, and under direction of the average pastor.

(532) *Problems, Difficulties and Needs of Church Members.* The pastor and other church workers were asked to state what they considered to be the chief problems, difficulties and needs of church members which the church must deal with in its task of training and nurture. Answers were sought under six headings:

- (a) Problems, difficulties and needs in connection with church members' home and family life.
- (b) In connection with their daily work.
- (c) In connection with their social and community relationships.
- (d) In connection with their citizenship, relation to nation and government, and relationship to other countries.
- (e) In connection with their church membership, Christian faith and character.
- (f) In connection with their knowledge and use of the Bible.

Several years ago the writer made a study of nearly fifty catechisms and other teaching material in common use in rural churches. It was found that the essential Christian doctrines were fully covered but that lessons upon the daily life of rural Christians were sadly lacking. Little guidance was given in these texts as to how the farmer should be a Christian in his home, in the market, on his fields, with his neighbors, as a citizen. With the help of other Christian rural workers and students a list of problems and needs of rural Christians was prepared. And upon the basis of this study Mr. Yu Mo-ren and the writer wrote a series of readers for use in rural churches, limiting the characters largely to those taught in the Thousand Character Textbooks for Farmers.¹³ Each reader has thirty lessons, mostly in story form, and the subjects of the six readers are:

1. The Christian Farmer and His Home
2. The Christian Farmer and His Vocation
3. The Christian Farmer and His Church
4. The Christian Farmer and His Bible
5. The Christian Farmer and His Community
6. The Christian Farmer and His Nation, and the World.

The data received under the questions above will be used to supplement the studies already made as a basis for better religious education materials for rural Christian adults and youth. For

¹³ Price, F. W. and Yu Mo-ren, *Advanced Rural Religious Readers*, Six volumes. Edited by N.C.C.R.E. (Christian Literature Society, Shanghai, 1933-1935).

example, under the home and family life, church workers discuss such difficulties and needs: poverty, inexpensive methods of home health and hygiene, Christianizing home relationships, early marriages, the Christian in a non-Christian family, the training of children to be Christians, memorial services for ancestors in the Christian home, the celebration of festivals, good and bad amusements for the home, family worship, the Christian home and its neighbors, Bible teachings which apply to the rural home.

(533) *Moral Failures of Church Members.* Church workers were asked to check the moral problems or failures known to exist among any of their church members. The replies were very frank. A few churches said that no such problems exist but the larger number admit that there are moral failures at times among some church members. These failures do not often involve a large number of members but they do present problems for the church in maintaining its Christian standards and influence in the community. The number of churches checking the different items in the list is here given:

<i>Number of churches which say that this moral problem exists among some church members (57 replies)</i>	
Serious dishonest practices	32
Continued support of superstitious customs	26
Gambling	21
Serious disputes and factions	19
Usury (loaning out money at high rates of interest)	19
Drinking wine to excess	16
Smoking of opium	9
Sexual immorality	9

The five immoral and unchristian practices which lead this list are also found among the eight practices which head the list of bad or unsocial types of behavior in rural communities (pp. 80-81). This shows to what extent the community influences the new Christian and what the new Christian must overcome in his family and social environment. Moral lapses and failures have been known in all churches from the time of Christ. The picture presented of the rural church in China is a human one. The real test is the extent to which the Christian community as a whole is living above the level of life about it and lifting society to a higher level.

TABLE XXI. CHIEF EMPHASIS IN THE TRAINING OF MEMBERS IN 70 SAMPLE RURAL CHURCHES

<i>Item</i>	<i>Number of churches in which this item is given</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Emphasis</i>	<i>Chief</i>	
Personal devotional life and prayer	29	38*	67
Life of Jesus	26	40*	66
Teachings of Jesus	22	43*	65
Service to the church	43	22	65
Christian home life	30	34*	64
New Testament facts	40	23	63
Opposition to sin and evil	33	29	62
Daily Christian living	32	29	61
Christian love	32	28	60
Christian worship	32	26	58
Opposition to idolatry and superstitions	34	24	58
Christian doctrines	44	13	57
Second birth	28	29	57
Confession of sins	34	22	56
Old Testament facts	48	5†	53
The sacraments	42	10	52
Development of Christian experience	39	13	52
Christian patriotism	39	10	49
Service to the community	32	12	44
Memorization of Bible passages	38	5†	43
Christianization of the social order	35	7†	42
International brotherhood and peace	33	5†	38
History and meaning of the church	36	..	36
Second coming of Christ	30	4†	34
Memorization of catechisms	29	3†	32

* Four highest scores under "chief emphasis."

† Four lowest scores (six items) under "chief emphasis."

(534) *Chief Emphasis in the Training of Members.* This question sought to discover what have been the chief emphases in the sample churches as they trained and nurtured their members. Surveyors consulted the rural church workers and checked a prepared list of items. Scores are arranged in the order of total number marked both "emphasis" and "chief emphasis." Seventy churches replied.

There is not sufficient difference between the higher and lower scores to justify giving great weight to Table XXI. Nevertheless,

the order of the scores is significant and will be interpreted as hopeful or discouraging by the person studying them, according to his own theological position and social-ethical interests. To the writer the table seems to show that: instruction in the rural churches is on the whole rich in content about the life and teachings of Jesus and essential Christian doctrines, and also fairly practical particularly with reference to home life; the relation of the Christian to his local church is being taught but the part of the local church in the Christianization of society and in the universal Christian fellowship is not receiving the attention it deserves; the second birth and personal religious experience are considered important; the second coming of Christ is not being stressed to the extent some have supposed; and the memorization of catechisms once so common is now giving way to Bible memorization and other methods of teaching.

(535) *Examples of Achievement or Failure in Christian Faith and Character.* Many churches reported "striking examples or instances of achievement or failure in Christian faith and character among church members." A few typical examples are selected.

Achievements: One woman walks 90 *li* to attend the annual Bible Class convention; members are patient under persecution at home; Chou—constantly heals and drives out demons by prayer; Moh—from the village of Longwei did not hear the gospel until he was 21 years of age and is now superintendent of the diocese; one Christian when his and other houses were on fire saved other people's things rather than his own; two Christian business men from the community now in Shanghai send contributions back regularly; idolatry entirely gone from this church; Wang—, a very bad gambler, drinker and opium-seller was converted and is now in a different business, an earnest Christian and leads others aright; change in lives of some members who formerly were gamblers; absolutely no gambling, drinking, opium-smoking and idolatry among the members; a weak Christian who has become full of love and strong in faith despite persecution; head of a village with great influence who became Christian and all his family in spite of ridicule; Tien—, a Christian for over 40 years has radiant faith, and leads a truly Christian life, holding family worship every night for his own family and the neighbors; many Christians were killed for not denying their faith in the Boxer year; members who stood firm

during communist attacks and threats; one Christian led his wife, son, daughter-in-law, daughters and two nieces to become Christians and ten neighbors to be inquirers; one woman who was faithful to the church although her non-Christian husband tore her Bible and threatened to expel her from the home; influence in one church of members coming to Sunday service from distant villages, attracting non-Christians as they come; faithfulness of one group of Christians in a preaching band going out every week.

Failures: A formerly good Christian who gambled and ran away; one of leading laymen fell into sin; some have left this church for the Roman Catholic church nearby; a victim of opium-smoking became an inquirer and was baptized, but went back to his old habits; an elder borrowed 500 *yuan* from the Church Savings Fund and has not returned the money for years; two Christians excommunicated because of taking second wives; members who left the church because of deaths in their families from epidemics; some members who worshipped idols under pressure and then were criticized by non-Christians for being false believers. It is interesting to note that most of the examples and instances reported have to do with faithfulness under persecution, personal faith and character, Christian witness, and personal forms of service.

(536) *The Bible in the Training of Church Members.* "What parts of the Bible are used the most in the training of members?" The Gospels are mentioned most frequently, by 58 churches. St. John leads the list of individual books mentioned, followed by St. Mark. The Epistles of the New Testament are mentioned by 17 churches, Acts of the Apostles by 13, the New Testament by 9 and special passages from the Bible such as Matthew 5-7 and Psalm 23 by 9 churches. Romans leads the list of individual epistles mentioned, followed by I and II Corinthians. Only 15 churches mention Old Testament books; Psalms leads the list, followed by books of the Pentateuch. Three churches mention Old Testament stories. The Gospels are still the part of the Bible taught to most members. Both this question and the one on chief emphases in training show that aside from some stories the values of the Old Testament are being neglected. The reading of the Old Testament would be difficult for most rural Christians but much material from the Old Testament would be valuable in teaching and in preaching.

(536) *Other Texts and Teaching Materials.* The sample churches furnished lists of other texts and teaching material used. These are chiefly the simpler publications of the Christian Literature Society, Religious Tract Society or denominational publication agencies—books, booklets, catechisms and leaflets. The number of books on ethical and social as well as doctrinal aspects of Christianity is increasing. The classified list of books being used will be of interest chiefly to workers in China.

(537) *Difficulties in Training of Members.* Among the difficulties felt by pastors and other church workers in the training of members are: the difficulty of arousing interest in study and in continuous study; the intellectual passiveness of many members; lack of persistence; irregular attendance at classes; difficulty in finding suitable time and place for a group; lack of voluntary teachers who can teach well; unequal educational standards in many classes; many textbooks too difficult for the ordinary rural Christian; preoccupation of rural Christians in their work; illiteracy; isolation of many members; lack of simple commentary or Bible-reading guide for Christians who study at home.

D. *Religious Education in the Family.*

Because of the importance of the family in Chinese social life the Christian church in China has been giving increasing attention to the "Christianization" of home and family life. In previous sections we have noted many facts about rural families and the influence of the church on rural homes. A majority of the sample churches state that they have laid emphasis upon Christian home life. What definite methods have these churches used to help Christians in their homes and to help homes of their families become truly Christian? Many questions were asked under this heading and some of the most important data are summarized below:

(540) Fifty-six surveyors report the number of times a year the pastor or other church leader usually visits all homes of members and inquirers. The frequency varies from once a year in some very large parishes to once a week in other parishes with small area or small number of members. The earnestness of the pastor is also a factor. The average number of *pastoral visits* per year to all member and inquirer homes is about 11. Five say the number is "uncertain," a few others say they go often or constantly. More dis-

couraging reports are: "Some members he visits once a month, some members never;" "many homes he has not visited for several years," "he has never visited all homes in the parish." On these visits the pastor or other workers lead family worship, teach, discuss family problems, comfort the sick, pray for the sick, exhort the cold members, talk about the church, teach hymns, give personal guidance, give suggestions on home health and hygiene, organize literacy classes, gather in neighbors for a preaching service, settle quarrels, lead weddings or funerals, or administer Holy Communion to the sick or aged. Very few report any help given in agricultural problems or community affairs, or in home recreation. Few report any special interest in children on these visits.

(541) Twenty-five churches, about one-third, report that religious meetings are frequently held in the homes of members, and 45 report that such meetings are occasionally held.

(542) Sixty-seven churches say that daily *family worship* is encouraged but a much smaller number say that guidance and help are given to the members. Very often the family worship taught is simply a blessing to be said or sung before meals. Many churches speak of the difficulties in getting rural families to observe family worship. The materials for worship furnished by some churches are for the most part leaflets with songs, and short prayers. Some give lists of daily readings to be followed. The Fukien Methodist Conference Religious Education Committee has prepared a special Manual for Christian homes. Some pastors give their members Bible pictures with verses to repeat in their family prayers. Outlines for family worship in the magazine, *Christian Farmer*, are used a little in some sections. Of the churches estimating the number of families with daily worship, two-thirds give a number less than ten. Many say "a few" or "very few." On the other hand a few churches report a large number of family altars, as a result of special effort. Church No. 45 reports that all of its member families now have some form of Christian worship each day. The Kutien Methodist Church (Church No. 55) tells of 56 families having daily worship but speaks also of the difficulties where Christian families live with or near other families who do not sympathize with them in their efforts.

(543) Most of the churches encourage *improvement of homes* largely through preaching and exhortation. About 20 per cent of

the churches report definite efforts at home improvement—cleanliness and hygiene, planting of flowers, better light and ventilation, indoor decoration—with results in some Christian homes that can be observed. One church selected six homes in different parts of the parish and demonstrated in these what could be done at very little cost to make the home cleaner, lighter, and more attractive.

(544) About half of the churches are making efforts to introduce *Christian literature*, Christian periodicals such as *The Christian Farmer* and *Farmer's Friend*, and Christian art into the homes of members. Financial difficulties and limited materials available prevent other churches from doing what they would like to do. Sunday School pictures and other colored posters are frequently given to homes for interior decoration. Some pastors write out mottoes on red paper at New Year time for members to paste on their walls or doors. Many churches give or sell Christian calendars to their members.

(548) *Ancestor Worship*. Thirteen churches say that they prohibit or oppose *all* forms of ancestor worship. Most of the other churches are trying to find suitable Christian substitutes for the practice. The forms generally disapproved by the churches are: kneeling and kowtowing, burning of incense and paper money, sacrifices, presenting of sacrificial foods, burning of candles, all superstitious ceremonies at the graves, worship of ancestral tablets. The forms or modifications of forms approved in the majority of the churches are: repair of graves at *Ch'ing Ming*, the Spring Festival; memorial services to ancestors in homes, the church or the cemetery; observance of birthdays of deceased parents or ancestors in the homes; hanging photographs and pictures in the home; the keeping of family records; sincere remembrance but not worship.

One-third of all the sample churches report regular Christian memorial services in the church or at homes at the ancestor worship seasons. Some interesting Christian adaptations of old forms are described. One church sends off firecrackers at its memorial service in the church cemetery. At the Spring Festival one church has its members bring their family records or genealogies to church, and another puts pictures of deceased members on the walls. Some churches plant trees or flowers in the church cemetery at the ancestor worship festival. The Kengchiatsun Church (Church No. 52) has this unusual Christian custom: Early on the morning of

the Lunar New Year the Christians meet for a service and then the family heads of the Keng clan take their families to the ancestral hall and tell them of their ancestors' history. In one region where it is the custom for a family to visit the ancestors' graves after a wedding in the family the Christians continue the practice but substitute a memorial and worship service at the graves instead of the usual sacrifices.

(546-548) *The guidance which the church gives to parents* in the character and religious training of children is limited largely to exhortations in sermons and personal conversation. Much of the exhortation is very general in nature. Six churches report special organizations or meetings for parents or for mothers, a very small proportion. Most of the pastors leave this type of work to the women evangelists or in some cases to their wives, but the large majority of these women workers are untrained for the task and the opportunity. One surveyor writes, "The Bible woman is supplied with excellent materials but does not know how to use them. Her training was along the old lines." A few churches with interested or especially trained leaders stand out in their program for parents and children. Eleven churches (15 per cent) refer to use of the Home Week materials prepared with much care each year by the National Christian Council. Twenty-four churches (33 per cent) say that they observe Christian Home Week some time during the year, not necessarily at the time designated by the National Christian Council Homes Committee. Guidance to young men and young women preparing for married life is not easy to give because of early marriage, the authority of parents and the social system in Chinese families. However, about one-third of the case studies report that pastors and preachers give attention to this problem by urging Christian engagement and marriage ceremonies, by talks with the parents or young people before the ceremony, by opposing extravagant expenditures. A few churches require that Christians shall marry only Christians but such a regulation would be difficult to enforce in many communities where the number of Christians is still small.

(549) Christian parents are encouraged to bring their children with them to church in 60 parishes (82 per cent). Fourteen churches (19 per cent) keep a list of all children in Christian families; five of these are lists of only baptized children. Five churches sent copies

of their complete lists, some showing birthdays and ages. Mrs. Siek's church (Church No. 62) furnished 181 names with birthdays. The Mingsing Church has a "Society of Little Christians." These churches are pointing the way. The study of church membership showed there is an average of one child under 16 in Christian families to each church member. Yet comparatively few churches are well acquainted with these children of the church, are studying their needs and are planning carefully for their nurture in church and home.

(551) In 24 churches (about one-third) there have been instances of a whole family or clan becoming Christian at one time. But the total number reported is small. The Hsientsun Church in Kwangtung (Church No. 9) says that on three occasions a whole clan (village) asked for baptism. Some say that inquirers and new Christians are coming in more by families. In the Tsehkue Church in Chekiang (Church No. 69) is found the only real example of a mass movement toward the church, with many families in several villages seeking membership. This has happened largely as the result of healings through prayer. One of my former students at Nanking Theological Seminary belonged to a clan in Fukien province which is entirely Christian and which now uses the former ancestral hall as a place of worship.¹⁴

(562) Thirty-two or nearly one-half of the churches studied report homes that are becoming centers for a new church group or branch church. In two cases villages with a large number of Christians forming a worship group or branch church have given themselves a new name, *Fuh-in Tsun* or Gospel Village.

E. *Special Work for Children of the Community.*

(554) (a) Sunday or weekday classes or clubs for children of government or private primary schools. We have seen that about one-half of these sample churches have primary schools of their own. The Sunday School in the church has been chiefly for this group of children. Are the churches, whether they have primary schools connected with them or not, reaching children of the community with any program of religious education? Are they influencing the children of non-Christians, and of Christians, who attend the government or private elementary schools? A very small num-

¹⁴ Liao Ho from Chienning, Fukien.

ber seem to be doing anything effective in this field. Nine churches report Sunday Schools in the church center or in villages which are attended by pupils of government or primary schools. One church conducts a school in cooperation with the community and so its work for children draws many from non-Christian homes. Four churches report clubs for boys and girls which reach some of the community children not connected with the church. One is similar to the 4-H Club in America.

(555) Other organizations for children. One church has a Children's Society. The 15th Township Church in Mingtsing, Fukien (Church No. 19) has a pastor deeply interested in children. He has organized a "Society of Little Christians," which enrolls all baptized children of the church not communicant members.

(556) Neighborhood or village Sunday Schools. Sixteen churches say that they are conducting what are known in China as "neighborhood Sunday Schools," ungraded Sunday Schools for children of all ages and types, making use of picture, story and song materials. Some of these are in the church center but most are held in villages under the leadership of women evangelists or lay-workers. The Tsouping Church (Church No. 35) reports five schools in villages but usually there are only one or two. There are wide opportunities for such schools but the chief difficulty seems to be lack of interest in children, lack of good teachers and lack of suitable materials. Five churches report that they are beginning to use the new materials for Neighborhood and Village Sunday Schools published by the National Committee for Christian Religious Education, with good results.¹⁵

(557) The Daily Vacation Bible School movement, now called *Hsia Ling Erh Tung Hui* (for Church Vacation Work for Children) in many places has been popular chiefly in the cities. Less than one-third of the sample churches, 21, report that they have a part in this movement. Thirteen of these churches have just one school for a month or so in the summer; 8 have 2 to 5 schools in different villages. The teachers are women evangelists, wives of pastors, local Christians and occasionally middle school students at home on vacation. Seven churches say that they formerly carried on this

¹⁵ *Neighborhood Sunday School Lessons, Visual Materials and Teachers' Manual*. Prepared by Religious Education Department of Nanking Theological Seminary and published by N.C.C.R.E. (1936).

work but have given it up. The chief difficulties are, again, lack of interest on the part of the church workers, lack of finances and material, lack of plan and the problem of summer work in the fields which makes attendance irregular. A few churches which have put emphasis on this work report excellent results, showing what can be done with limited resources of personnel and funds, even in the country.

(558) Christian missionaries in Japan have established many kindergartens and nurseries. In China not a few Christian kindergartens and nurseries are found in large cities. But there is practically no such effort in the villages. Only one church (Church No. 17) which has two young women evangelists and help from a nearby institution, has a kindergarten class. Two churches report attempting to start work for young children but giving it up because of lack of teachers and finance. One church reports having tried a nursery class on Sunday during the morning worship service, different mothers taking turns in caring for the small children. This plan makes it possible for more mothers to attend the worship service in quiet and could well be tried in other churches. A room and some simple play equipment would be all that was necessary, and the care of the group of small children could be made an educational project. Regular kindergartens and nurseries are probably not practicable in most rural churches but much could be done to help mothers in directing the play and other activities of their small children. A simple plan whereby mothers would take turns caring for a group of children might be worked out in villages, thus giving some mothers more free time for their home work and other interests. The experiment would be interesting.

F. *Special Work for Youth.*

(559) This survey has shown (277) that the rural churches have reached youth between the ages of 15 and 30 less effectively than other age groups. Young men and women take part in the life and work of the rural church and in many parishes are very active and earnest. The literacy schools and various service projects have attracted the younger group. However very few churches have what could be called a youth program. Three report evangelistic bands or fellowships especially of young people. One reports a *Hwa-kuang Tuan*, Y.W.C.A. organization for older girls. Another church (No.

56) in a *hsien* city has a Social Service League for young men and a Girls' League for young women. Five other churches describe some kind of special organization or activity for the youth in their membership. The Mintsing Church under its active young pastor has organized a Rural Improvement Society in which the young farmers take great interest. In the Polihsiang Church (Church No. 23) a group of young farmers has been organized for study and for Christian witness and also for some service to the community. Recently they repaired a road. In another church a college graduate returned to his home in the community and helped to start a club for young men, both Christians and non-Christians. The Shunhwachen church connected with the Nanking Theological Seminary Rural Training Center has many kinds of groups and activities for young farmers—Farm-study Clubs, Agricultural Improvement Societies, inter-village games and field day, music clubs, and gives youth a large place in the church program. New activities for older girls and young mothers have been introduced. The Y.W.C.A. village experiment at Sunghsu within the Shunhwachen parish has specialized on the 15 to 20 year age group with considerable success.

It has been pointed out by many rural workers in China that the youth period is really very short in rural China. Because of early marriages in most sections boys or girls are hardly grown before the responsibilities of adult life, vocation and home are upon them. In spite of this fact there are distinctive characteristics of rural youth up to the age of 30 that deserve careful study. A vital and interesting program is needed to attract and hold them in the church.¹⁶ The communists in some regions of China have appealed most strongly to this age. This survey indicates that the majority of rural churches are not yet awake to their responsibility and opportunity among adolescents and younger adults both in and out of the church.

Conclusion. The program of the rural churches in Christian nurture is weakest among children and youth. Considerable emphasis has been given to the importance of the Christian home and there has been steady improvement in the methods of training inquirers. More attention is being given to the continuous nurture of church members, to special periods of training and to the train-

¹⁶ See *Religious Education in the Chinese Church, The Report of a Deputation*, Chs. VII and VIII on Youth Work, and "Religious Education for Rural Youth," in *Educational Review*, XXIII (1931), 487-492.

ing of lay-workers. But in these fields some churches are far ahead of others. The whole level of teaching in the rural churches needs to be lifted. The goal which some churches have set before them of an intelligent, active, consecrated membership is a goal that all need to work toward. A paper on "Training of Inquirers and Church Members for Christian Life and Service," which the writer prepared for the Fourth General Assembly of the Church of Christ in China, summarizes some of the studies made in the field of rural religious education and makes detailed recommendations and suggestions.

G. *Use of Literature and Art in Religious Education.*

H. *Special Work for Women.*

I. *Special Institutes or Periods of Religious Training for Members (training institutes and schools of a week or more).*

J. *Community Religious Education.*

These questions have been discussed to some extent in previous sections of the survey and the detailed data secured in the Survey will not be presented here.

3. *Worship*

4. *Preaching and Evangelism*

5. *Fellowship and Mutual Aid*

Survey data under these headings will be presented in the second volume.

6. *Sundays and Other Special Days.*

The observance of Sunday as a Christian day of rest and of worship is new to China. Government and educational institutions and some large businesses in the port cities close on Sunday. But to the masses Sunday is not a day of rest. Only for Christians has it become a day of worship. Chinese religious life has its periodical festivals and days or seasons of special worship, some widely observed over China, some limited to certain localities. To ask for the observance of one day in seven as a sacred day is to change the whole tempo of religious and social life among the Chinese. Missionaries coming from the West and with their own tradition of Sabbath observance naturally introduced Sunday as a day of Christian worship. The most common term for Sunday now among all the people is "Worship Day," and Monday is "Worship One," Tuesday is "Worship Two," etc. The government is trying to

popularize another term for week, *hsing-ch'i*. Sunday is *Hsing-ch'i* Day, Monday is *Hsing-ch'i* One, etc. It is generally known that Sunday is the Christian worship day but observance of the day by worship or even by rest is limited to a very small proportion of the population.

How is Sunday observed by Chinese rural Christians? Are western forms of observance being modified to any extent? How do rural conditions affect attendance at services? Is strict Sabbath observance possible? What church festivals appeal to the rural churches? What Chinese festivals are being adapted to Christian use?

(632) The sample churches were asked to describe a *typical Sunday program*. In 32 of the churches, nearly one-half, there are only Sunday morning services—a worship and preaching service and often a Sunday School. Ten other churches have morning and evening services but the evening service is usually only for Christians in the immediate neighborhood of the church building. In six churches there are morning services and Sunday School or Christian Endeavor in the afternoon. In seven other churches the afternoons are given to services in branch churches and in six churches evangelistic bands are said to go out preaching in the villages on Sunday afternoons. A larger number no doubt do this but the number who have a regular practice of Sunday afternoon evangelism is probably limited. Eight churches report in detail an all-Sunday program for different groups—church services, Sunday Schools, group meetings, Bible classes, children's work, preaching and visitation. In a few churches members from a distance have their noon meal together at the church, then either stay for afternoon meetings or return to their homes immediately.

What changes in the Sunday program are made with the seasons? Twenty-eight churches say that the time of services is changed in the different seasons. A few omit part of the program on short winter Sundays or in busy seasons and some Sunday Schools close in the summer. In six churches changes are made according to the church calendar. Twenty churches say that no important changes are made in the program during the year.

(633) *Record of Sunday Attendance*. Only eight churches reply that they keep a detailed record of attendance at their Sunday services, a few others keep a general record. Four of these churches

THE CHURCH

sent copies of recent records, some in full detail. The Shunhwachen experimental parish has records of Sunday attendance for four years and charts of attendance based on these records, showing the effect of weather, season of year, distance from church, spiritual earnestness and other factors upon attendance. In the Shunhwachen church (Church No. 30) the average Sunday attendance has increased each year as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Average attendance at Sunday morning service</i>
1931	15
1932	37
1933	47
1934	51
1935	73
1936	76

The average attendance on Sundays has increased fivefold while the membership has increased threefold.

An analysis of attendance by months for one year (1934) shows:

<i>Month</i>	<i>Average attendance at Sunday morning service</i>
January	45.7
February	58.0
March	59.2
April	56.8
May	43.2
June	34.0
July	33.5
August	39.5
September	49.0
October	41.7
November	58.0
December	80.8

The attendance is high in the winter months, especially around Christmas and Chinese New Year time, then drops to the lowest in the busy summer months. There is a slight rise in September and another drop at harvest time, and a rise in November.

(634) Most of the churches studied furnished general observations on Sunday attendance. The seasons of highest attendance are winter (32 churches) and spring, usually early spring (34 churches), autumn (9 churches) and summer (2 churches). Days on which the

highest attendance is observed are: Christmas Sunday (25 churches), Chinese New Year Sunday (13), Easter Sunday (11), communion Sundays (5), Thanksgiving (4), Quarterly or Annual meeting (4).

The seasons of lowest attendance are summer (29 churches), autumn, usually early autumn (17 churches), busy seasons of planting or harvest (21), winter (5), spring (6), silkworm season (1), last month before Lunar New Year (3). The Sundays on which lowest attendance is observed are mostly in planting or harvest seasons or at times of heavy rains.

Sixty-four churches give estimates on the average attendance per Sunday. The percentage of total membership which attends each Sunday varies from 15 per cent to 90 per cent. The mean average is 52 per cent. This corresponds fairly closely with the estimates in another section of the Survey (§ 281). In other words the average attendance per Sunday is about half the membership but there is great variation between seasons and on account of other special factors.

(635) *Methods of Follow-up.* Only three churches admit that they have no methods of following up members who are frequently absent. The large majority report visits by the pastor and officers of the church and some mention "exhortations." Twenty-four churches say that some members who miss the Sunday morning service at the church for special reasons have some kind of service or meeting in their own home or village.

(636) The pastors and other church workers were asked to indicate what they considered the most serious *obstacles to regular attendance* at Sunday services. The scores on the items listed in the question are:

<i>Reasons for non-attendance</i>	<i>Number of churches (69 replies)</i>
Busy seasons	64
Distance from church	33
Sickness	25
Lack of pastoral visitation	12
Lack of emphasis on regular attendance	8
Lack of Bible teaching regarding the Sabbath	8

Several added the item, "coldness," "lack of spiritual zeal," which of course is a reason for a considerable proportion of non-attendance in any season. Distance prevents more women than men from

attending. Sickness is evidently a quite prevalent obstacle. Busy seasons on the farm is given as the chief reason for irregular attendance.

(637) Aside from attendance on worship and preaching services and perhaps some Bible or Sunday School classes, *is the Sabbath strictly observed as a day of rest?* The churches were asked what proportion of their members keep the Sabbath strictly, abstaining from all but necessary work on Sundays. There were 54 replies. Fifteen of this number, a little over one-fourth, say that no members keep the Sabbath strictly. Other estimates range from 2 per cent to 80 per cent, the average being 18 per cent, less than one-fifth of the membership. An average of 69 per cent of farmer members do farm work on Sundays; 10 churches say 100 per cent. An average of 73 per cent buy and sell on Sundays. In many communities building is not common but 29 churches report that 50 per cent of their members do building work if necessary on Sundays. Thirty-two churches estimate that 71 per cent of their merchant members open their shops and do business for all or part of Sunday; 16 or just one-half say that all the merchant members do; only 6 churches say that less than 10 per cent of their merchant members do business on Sunday.

(638) Possibility of strict Sabbath observance. Of 62 church leaders replying 40 or nearly two-thirds believe that strict Sabbath observance is not possible in the country. Fourteen (21 per cent) say that it is possible and 8 say "Possible but very difficult." On the other hand 58 out of 62 think stricter Sabbath observance should be urged. Opinion is equally divided on requirement of strict observance; 26 think strict observance should be required, 27 think it should not, and 4 say it would be very difficult or impossible. Many difficulties in the way of strict observance are mentioned in addition to the obstacles to regular attendance at services listed above; the large non-Christian public which does not observe Sunday, economic conditions and poverty which force daily work for a living, the market-day system especially in north China, lack of such custom in society, necessary daily care of animals and crops, the fact that the farmer must work in good weather, merchants who close their shops on Sunday would lose trade seriously because other merchants do not do so, the psychological difficulty of crowding seven day's work into six, types of work such as silk-worm raising

and fishing which come at certain seasons and demand full time, abstinence from all work would give non-Christians the impression of laziness.

A large number of churches suggested ways in which Sunday observance could be improved or ideal ways in which the day should be used, in addition to attendance on worship: helping others, teaching classes, evangelism and personal witness, visiting inquirers or sick members, fellowship with other Christians, home services, tilling the church farm. One leader suggested that the whole day should be spent at the church building. Several leaders advocate a half day of worship, preaching and study either in the central or branch church which all should attend, and the members free for the other half of the day.

(640) *Observance of Native Festivals by the Church.* Fifty-six churches say that their members take part in locally observed festivals. But 49 of these qualify their answer by such comments: "except idolatrous and superstitious forms; except birthdays of gods; except ancestor worship; except the Feast of Ghosts and spirit days; always in a Christian way or in their own homes, not with the public." Six churches answer with a definite "No."

(641) Leaders in the rural churches were asked what native festivals are being observed by the churches in a Christian way or which, in their opinion, might be given a Christian interpretation and form of observance. The following were mentioned:

Ch'ing Ming, the Spring Festival and time of ancestor worship and visits to graves; used as a Christian Ancestor Memorial Day, for planting trees as the government suggests, or for observance of Easter. (25 churches)

The Mid-autumn Festival, the fifteenth of the eighth moon, or other autumn festivals as a Harvest Day or Thanksgiving Day. (25 churches) Some churches have used the Sunday nearest this festival, others prefer a later day in the autumn when all the crops are in.

The Lunar New Year, or Sunday following it, for a Family Day Consecration Sunday. (11 churches)

The Dragon Boat Festival, fifth day of the fifth moon, as a Health Sunday or other type of observance. One church asks its members on this day to put the Chinese character, *ai*, meaning love over the door instead of a sprig of mugwort (*ai*) as is the custom in many sections. (6 churches)

Others mention Christianization of the spring planting festivals (3 churches), the Winter Solstice which comes near Christmas (2), Children's Day (set by the government for April 4th).

(642) *National Holidays.* Fourteen churches (19 per cent) say that they have no special observance or notice of national holidays. Thirty-six observe in some way the "Double Ten," National Independence Day October 10th, by flying a flag, by special services or prayer meetings on the day or the following Sunday, or by co-operating in community observances. Six churches mention observance of the birthday or death day of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and five mention observance of the New Year Day, January 1st, on the solar calendar.

(642) *Church Calendar.* The sample churches were asked to report on special Sundays or days of the church calendar which are being observed by them:

Christmas Day or Christmas Sunday is observed in 68 churches (93 per cent) by special services, by special music and hymns, sometimes by Christmas pageants and plays and in many churches by a meal together of the whole congregation. Many churches report that they have special decorations at this time and some Christian homes are decorated. There is little giving of presents in rural churches and congregations. The tendency in rural as well as city churches is toward less noisy and more serious and beautiful observance of the day but many churches need help in the preparation of their Christmas program.¹⁷

Easter is observed in 59 of the sample churches (81 per cent), by special services, reception of new members and observance of Holy Communion, by memorial services to ancestors and departed friends, and by flower decorations. The writer visited the Bientang Church (Church No. 1) on Easter Sunday, 1937. The members came in from the villages bringing wild flowers in their hands to decorate the church and greeting each other "Ye-su fuh-ho liao—Jesus is risen."

Forty-nine churches report a special observance of New Year Sunday, presumably the Lunar New Year.

Observance of Whitsunday or Pentecost is reported by 25 churches, Home or Family Sunday by 24, Children's Day by 26, Harvest or Thanksgiving Sunday by 20, Rural Life Sunday by 10, All Saints' Day by 6.

Attendance at Christmas and Easter Sunday is much larger than on other Sundays, and attendance on the other church festivals or special Sundays considerably larger.

(643) *Market or Fair Days.* Market days once every three or four days hold an important place in rural life, in north China

¹⁷ Liu Yuen-Ching, Miss, *The Observance of Christmas in Chinese Churches*, unpublished M.R.E. thesis, Nanking Theological Seminary (1937).

especially, and every rural section has its big fair days in the year. Eleven churches report that they hold special services on market days or fair days, four of them say in place of the Sunday service. Naturally in the north many market days and Sundays coincide. A few churches attempt evangelistic work or preaching on fair days but others say that the results do not justify the effort. Evidently there is not a great effort to modify the church program because of the market day system or annual fairs.

Conclusion. The effect of grafting the one-day-in-seven custom of worship and Sabbath observance upon the old tree of Chinese rural social life has been interesting. All of the churches studied observe Sunday with regular worship and preaching services but attendance varies at different times of the year and depending upon the distance of the members from the church and other factors. Strict observance of the Sabbath by complete rest or a day entirely devoted to worship is rare. Most church leaders think that the peculiar conditions of Chinese rural society make such an ideal very difficult to achieve. The age-long custom of festival-observance is reflected in the interest of the rural church in special days, both festivals of the church and Christian forms of native festivals. Attendance is higher on these special occasions and there are great possibilities in the development of these celebrations in rural China. They can be used to enrich the Christian faith and life of church members and inquirers and also to interest and influence non-Christian society. Christian festivals will also have a large place in rural home life and if they become customs handed down from one generation to another will help Christianity to become more deeply rooted in rural culture. Possibilities in Christian observance of national festivals have not been fully developed, and there is room for interesting study and experiment here.¹⁸ More too could be made of significant days in the history of the local church and of birthdays of old and honored members and of departed Christians.

7. *Community Service.*

A thorough study of the forms of community service initiated or now being carried on by rural churches is beyond the intended scope

¹⁸ See the excellent discussion of this subject in *The Use of Material from China's Spiritual Inheritance in the Christian Education of Chinese Youth*, by Warren H. Stuart, especially Ch. II, "Christianizing the Festivals."

THE CHURCH

of this volume. The data secured from the sample churches will be summarized in the second volume.¹⁹

TABLE XXII. COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS IN 73
SAMPLE RURAL CHURCHES

Service Project	Number of churches in which this project			
	(a) Is carried on by church alone	(b) Is carried on by church in cooperation with community or government	(c) Was initiated or promoted by church, now by others	(d) Is carried on by church in cooperation with training institution
1. Health Campaigns	2	7	2	1
2. Improvement of health conditions	13	8	2	1
3. Vaccination against smallpox	21	14	6	1
4. Clean-up campaigns	14	9	3	1
5. Anti-opium, anti-narcotic campaigns	11	7	5	..
6. Distribution of health literature	16	5	2	1
7. Child Welfare Day	7	4	1	1
8. Medical center or clinic	8	3	..	..
9. Travelling clinic	5	..	1	..
10. Modern midwifery	5	1	3	..
11. Better recreation	13	4	1	1
12. Extension of improved seeds	14	5	2	1
13. Improvement of poultry breeds	10	2	1	1
14. Improvement of livestock breeds	4	3	2	1

¹⁹ Some recent books and articles on the rural church and rural service and reconstruction are:

The Church and Rural Reconstruction. A Symposium of the T'inghsien Rural Institute, 1933.

Hubbard, Hugh W., "Mass Education," in *China Christian Year Book*, 18th issue (1932-1933), pp. 277-291.

Hunter, J. S., "Christian Social Betterment Movements," in *China Christian Year Book*, 18th issue (1932-1933), pp. 397-407.

Hsu, Leonard S., "Rural Reconstruction" in *China Christian Year Book*, 20th issue (1936-1937), pp. 309-318.

Carson, A. L., "Christian Institutions and the Rural Reconstruction Movement," in *op. cit.*, pp. 241-280.

Taylor, J. B., "Progress of the Cooperative Movement," in *op. cit.*, 9, 265-274.

Chang, Fuliang, "Christian Leaven in Rural China," in *Chinese Recorder*, LXIV, No. 5, May 1933, 273-283.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

TABLE XXII. COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS IN 73
SAMPLE RURAL CHURCHES—*Continued*

<i>Service Project</i>	<i>Number of churches in which this project</i>			
	(a) <i>Is carried on by church alone</i>	(b) <i>Is carried on by church in cooperation with community or government</i>	(c) <i>Was initiated or promoted by church, now by others</i>	(d) <i>Is carried on by church in cooperation with training institution</i>
15. Fight against plant or animal diseases	4	2	2	1
16. Introduction of better tools	4	1	2	1
17. Introduction of better fertilizers	2	3	..	..
18. Agricultural fair	1	2	..	1
19. Improved tea shop	2	2	3	..
20. Social or club room	4	2	2	1
21. Organization and direction of farmers' cooperative societies	6	7	5	1
22. Road building or repair	2	7	5	1
23. Child Welfare work	6	9	1	..
24. Organization and leadership of boys' and girls' clubs	8	1	1	1
25. Gardening clubs	3	1	1	..
26. Music clubs	4	1	1	..
27. Famine relief, war relief	6	12	1	..
28. Community charity	9	6	..	..
29. Development of supplementary industries	9	5	2	1
30. Tree-planting	2	10	1	1
31. Training courses for farmers	6	5	1	1
32. Providing loans, credit for farmers	2	8	3	1
33. Reclamation of uncultivated land	2	4	2	1
34. Improving relations between owners and tenants	1	3	..	..
35. Mass Education (adult literacy schools)	22	8	1	1
36. Social or moral reform society	6	3	1	1

However, since the service of the church and its leaders and members to the community is such a vital part of the educational program of the church, the answers to one question under this heading are analyzed below in order to give the reader some idea of the development of rural churches in this field.

(651) The surveyors were asked to check a list of 36 community service projects, indicating which projects are being carried on by the church in cooperation with the community or government and which were initiated or promoted by the church but are now carried on by others. A fourth classification was added by some churches: projects carried on by the church in cooperation with a nearby training institution.

Some kind of project is being carried on in 49, or two-thirds of the sample churches. The smallest number checked by one church is 1, the largest number 24. Vaccination, literacy schools, health work and extension of improved seeds lead the list. While the largest number of churches carrying on any one project by itself or in cooperation with the community is 35 yet the table shows that various forms of service have been introduced into more than one-half of the churches. With better training of rural church leaders for community service, with a better program of lay-training, with increased emphasis upon the outreach of the church into community life and increased possibilities of cooperation with government and other agencies in service, and with the new attention to extension service into rural churches in some of the Christian colleges and theological schools we may see a great development in this phase of rural church life. Only as it undertakes some forms of service will the church help to meet the various needs in the community discussed in Part I of this Survey. Only as it becomes a community-serving church will it have a part in the stirring new movements for rural reconstruction in China. The church may make its own contribution of service, it may act as an impartial and constructive critic in rural reconstruction, and it may help to furnish sources of spiritual power for practical service and creative fellowship in the rebuilding of community life.

Dr. P. C. Hsu, formerly professor of philosophy of religion at Yenching University, and recently director of the Lichwan Rural Reconstruction Unit of the Kiangsi Christian Rural Service Union, does not believe that the rural church is capable of taking a vital

part in rural reconstruction. He says, "The traditional rural church is not equal to the task of improving the livelihood of the peasants and of solving the many burning problems of the rural communities. Inasmuch as the church is not the fit vehicle for rural reconstruction, experimental centers must be organized to seek a way out. Religion must cooperate with science in the work of rural reconstruction, emphasizing the material aspect of life. Spiritual knowledge and cultivating civic sentiment are of equal importance with the salvation of the soul. In carrying on this hard and heavy work the church must cooperate with all organizations, public or private, engaged in similar activities."²⁰ The writer disagrees with Dr. Hsu in his estimate of the possibilities of the rural church. The present studies show sufficient vitality in the church to make it capable of serving its community according to its resources and abilities. It has a distinctive contribution to make to rural betterment. Technical assistance and wide guidance will be needed in order that it may fulfill its mission and ministry of service. Experimental centers are necessary for research and training of new leaders. But they are costly and cannot be duplicated in great numbers. A simple program of service which the ordinary rural church can undertake with limited financial resources, must be promoted and extended as widely as possible through the Christian rural movement. This Survey shows that rural churches are moving in the direction of a community program. Such a program, as other sections of the Survey show, will not weaken, but will rather strengthen the evangelistic, educational and other aspects of the church's work and influence, and will help the church in achieving self-support.

²⁰ Hsu, P. C., *op. cit.*, p. 327.

PART IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

We have seen that Protestant Christianity is taking root in the villages of China. At least two-thirds of all Protestant Christians live in the country. The rural church is still young, with only a few decades of history, but it is growing more rapidly than the city church; and the proportion of rural Christians to the population of their home communities is larger than the proportion of Christians in China as a whole or in any one province. The growth in numbers has been most marked since 1922 and especially in the years since 1932.

The ten thousand rural churches, branch churches and village chapels are deeply influenced by the community life about them. They show many characteristics of all societies in rural China. They are influenced by the inherited culture in which they are placed and by age-long customs and ways of living; and also by the profound social changes coming even to the villages as China feels the impact of modern forces and asserts her new national life. Our studies show that many environmental factors—population, agriculture, economic conditions, family organization, communications, educational facilities, moral and religious behavior—condition the development of the rural church.

The rural church in turn is influencing the society about it. Hitherto this influence has been largely personal through the evangelistic work and friendly contacts of pastors, teachers and church members. But Christian group influence is beginning to be felt in many communities. The Christian church is being challenged by the physical and social needs as well as spiritual needs in rural areas and also by the rising tide of interest in "rural reconstruction."

Our studies show that rural parishes in China tend to follow the lines of natural communities and groupings of villages rather than the boundaries of artificial political divisions. This is a hopeful sign. The market area or natural community seems to be the best unit for programs of rural service which depend chiefly upon

social organization and the efforts of the people themselves rather than upon political administration, and for such voluntary societies as the church. A goal toward which to work would be at least one strong well-organized rural church under good leadership providing careful training for its members and a ministry of service to society in every natural rural community in China. At present not more than one-third of the rural communities in China have churches or even branch churches located in them.

There is need for both extensive and intensive effort, extensive effort in the planting of churches or branch churches in new communities, and intensive effort in the cultivation of individual parishes within limited areas in such a way that the church may become strong in numbers and in quality of life, support its own leadership and work and affect deeply the life about it.

The studies in this volume show that the program of the rural church has been centered too much in the church building or the place where the church is located. The most successful churches are those which are reaching out constantly into the villages about them. Christian rural work must be home-centered and village-centered. Christian groups within villages must be strengthened and village leaders developed. The Christian farmer must see the implications of his Christian faith and experience for his daily relationships and his regular vocation. The church then becomes the fellowship of village Christian groups in a natural community, a center for occasional periods of common worship and mutual help, and the heart of a Christian program for all the villages of the area.

The self-help principle needs to be emphasized from the very beginning in these village Christian groups and community churches. This does not mean that supervision and some financial assistance are not necessary. On the other hand some of the most successful churches are those which have received the best direction and supervision and wisely administered grants-in-aid. But local initiative and effort have been constantly encouraged and money has been used to build up the parish and its program in such a way as to increase and not lessen the local sense of responsibility. There is nothing in our Survey to indicate that subsidies to a local church are in themselves harmful. The church may develop more rapidly toward self-support and with more enthusiasm if there is a resident pastor or pastor not too far away from the parish. The danger in isolated

Christian groups which are part of a large circuit is that they may be satisfied with meeting only small local expenses and depend entirely upon mission-paid supervision for pastoral care.

The church organization and program needs to be developed around keenly felt needs or interests and sponsored as much as possible by the Christians themselves. Some churches are advancing much more rapidly than others in the enlisting of co-operation from church members and in the training of voluntary workers. The church, like all social groups in China without government direction and finance, must build from the bottom up. The activities of the church must be close to the interests and needs of the members. Any little church can do something in the way of service, among its members, in personal ways, and as a group for the community.¹

The training of inquirers and members for the Christian life is of utmost importance. Here some churches have accomplished much more than others. Literacy should certainly be emphasized. There should be a planned program of nurture for all grades of membership. More should be done in Christian homes and through family religious education. Less than half of the sample churches studied are working effectively among children and youth of the church or of the community. This means that increasing attention must be given to religious education. The achievement of self-support should be linked up to a program of training in stewardship and giving, with much greater enlistment of the time and labor as well as money of rural Christians. Some churches have shown that dignified, beautiful and impressive worship services are possible even in country churches. More Christian adaptations can be made of Chinese forms, Chinese music and Chinese art and architecture. The festival, both the Christianized Chinese festival and the church festival, should be given a larger place in the rural church.

The question of what community service the rural church can undertake will be determined by its resources of leadership, membership and finance and the needs and opportunities in the community. The church must show its concern for social welfare and express its Christian faith and spirit in social relationships. Some things the church can do alone, some things it can initiate and turn

¹ Mr. John F. Reisner and Dr. J. L. Buck of the University of Nanking made many of these points years ago when they were prophets of a new rural emphasis in the Chinese Christian movement. See especially the notable article by J. L. Buck, "The Building of a Rural Church," *The Chinese Recorder*, LVIII, 7, July 1927, 403-416.

over to community agencies, some forms of service it can carry on in cooperation with government or local groups. Our studies show that the church can take its part in rural betterment without losing its distinctive purpose and spirit. The evangelical emphasis in the rural churches of the past must not be given up. The preaching and teaching of the gospel, the meeting of Christians for worship, the training of church members in Christian doctrine, are all important aims. But the church, the Christian group, which reaches out into the community in friendship and service and which influences ideals of rural reconstruction by its own faith and spirit, becomes stronger, not weaker. It finds new friends. It expresses Christian love. It is more of a leaven in community life. It has a part in the building of the new China. It becomes more deeply rooted in village society. Evangelism, religious education and community service can go hand in hand.

The implications of such a rural church program for leadership training are obvious. There must be more emphasis both upon the training of lay leaders in the churches and also upon the education of ministers and women evangelists who can serve this new kind of rural parish.² Creative thinking and experimentation are much needed at this point. Both missionary and Chinese supervisors should study rural community life, the hopeful experiments being made in various regions, the methods which are proving most fruitful, and test these in their own areas of work. Constant interchange of ideas and experience while the rural church is still young will advance the whole Christian rural movement. Research and experiments by Christian educational institutions or larger organizations are needed. The local church must now be brought into the center of the picture, and ways found of strengthening and helping the hundreds of little rural Christian groups with all of their possibilities. They are existing groups with a history and a purpose. They can become dynamic centers of rural regeneration.

The writer disagrees with the one-sided emphasis in *Rethinking Missions*: "The constructive rural work of the future should not be done with the primary aim of organizing churches but rather with the aim of penetrating country communities with ways of life that will bring enriched living to all members of it, a truer spirit of co-

² For a detailed discussion of specialized training for Christian rural service, see article by F. W. Price, "The Training of Rural Ministers," *The Chinese Recorder*, LXIV, 1, January 1933, 25-31.

operation, a more genuine interest in the education of children, in the productivity of the soil and in methods of raising the economic level of the neighborhood as well as in the health and spiritual growth of the people."³ The high ideals in the latter part of this statement cannot be realized fully in any one community nor on an extensive scale throughout rural China unless local Christian fellowships are strengthened. Methods of organization can be modified but some kind of organization is necessary.

Mission and church bodies are beginning to realize the importance of the rural church in the whole Christian movement. A rural church policy is now needed in many denominations. Fortunately there is little competition between church bodies either in regions or in local communities. Cooperation should be strengthened by co-ordination of resources in extension service to rural churches. Theological seminaries and Christian colleges have only begun to make their contribution in the field of rural Christian service. Regional organizations such as the North China Christian Rural Service Union could be promoted in all regions or provinces. National and interdenominational organizations such as the National Christian Council, National Committee for Christian Religious Education and Christian Literature Society, should have Rural Church Departments or committees.

Finally it is not merely new methods that our survey calls for, but also a new vision and a new passion. "We are concerned that the ideals in the new rural movement shall be Christian ideals. We are concerned over the driving power in reconstruction. We are concerned over the social philosophy of it all, where the movement is leading, what means it will employ. We believe that we have a message to give—of God and of Jesus Christ and of God's reign through human brotherhood and of God-guided and God-inspired life and experience that may be shared. If the Christian church has any distinct message, distinct mission, distinct life to give and to live, this is the day of opportunity. The opportunity may pass if we are not ready. It will be easier to let the church go along in the old way of not disturbing the community and hence not disturbed by the community. For the rural church to work at the heart of rural reconstruction will cost a great deal in thought, in energy, in opposition, perhaps in life. We will have to prepare ourselves and

³ *Rethinking Missions*, p. 99.

help prepare the church, we who humbly believe in working with God and in letting Him work in us to achieve the ends of true growth. The task before us demands a combination of mysticism and spiritual insight at their best, a union of social intelligence and of the passion to serve. We may see the Promised Land from afar but never enter it. And yet the ideal of a Christian rural society in China joining hands with a Christian rural society in other lands gleams before us and inspires us who would follow the Great Teacher and Lord. If we are true to our calling as Christian teachers, the vision will not let us rest, nor will it let generations of teachers who succeed us rest, until justice rolls down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream and the Reign of God comes with power in rural China.”⁴

⁴ Price, F. W., in “The Significance for Religious Education of the New Rural Reconstruction Movement in China,” Agricultural Missions Foundation, 1934.

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA DURING AND AFTER THE WAR

When the storm of war broke over China on July 7, 1937, we had completed the intensive survey of 73 out of the one hundred rural communities and churches selected for our study. At that time it was hoped that we might make a fresh survey of these representative churches every five years. But the long war and its aftermath have made that impossible. When the situation permits we hope to secure reports from or about all the churches studied in 1937 and to determine accurately what they have lost and gained, suffered and learned through a decade or more of turbulent Chinese history. At present it is possible to give only a general picture of the rural church in China since the survey of 1936-1937 based upon personal observation and correspondence with Chinese and missionary friends.

The eight-year war of resistance against Japan divided China into four parts: (1) Territory invaded and held by Japanese military forces, at its greatest extent approximately one-fourth of China. (2) Fighting zones where Japanese and Chinese armies clashed or where large National forces were maintained on guard. (3) Communist-controlled territory and regions of Communist guerilla warfare; the total area covered by National and Communist fighting against the invader was roughly another one-fourth of China. (4) Free China under the National Government; about one-half of the country.

Effect of the War Upon Rural Communities

Rural communities in the first three areas were affected by Japanese attacks and reprisals, the stationing or passage of troops, the destruction of property in the course of fighting or in the burning and looting that followed, and the disorder and banditry that often occurred along with the armed struggle. In National Free China

material damage was limited largely to bombings which were aimed at cities and large towns more than villages.

The war affected agriculture in varied ways. Perhaps 10 per cent of China's farming land was temporarily abandoned or lost to cultivation for a time because of fighting. On the other hand agricultural production in parts of Free China was increased 10 to 20 per cent, and better seeds and new varieties of crops were introduced in many areas. In 1938 hard-pressed Chinese forces dynamited one of the dikes of the Yellow River in order to check the advancing Japanese. The flood waters followed an ancient channel, drowning large numbers of peasants, displacing millions from their homes and inundating more than two million acres of cultivated land. In addition, droughts and floods from natural causes produced famine in several provinces, especially Honan and Kwangtung; because of wartime difficulties in transportation far less food was shipped to these provinces than might have been done in normal times.

The effects of the war upon rural social life were no less diverse and widespread. Millions of farmers as well as of city and town inhabitants were driven from their homes and moved for shorter or longer periods to safer places. The great migration to West China did not include a large proportion of farmers since most of these stayed where they could more easily return to their land. But conscription of man power by the National and Communist armies and by puppet armies in occupied territory reached the most remote villages. Perhaps eighty per cent of Chinese soldiers in this war were from rural families. The Chinese peasant was the "unsung hero" in Dr. James Yen's words; he fought the war at the front, produced food in the rear and engaged in all types of construction work. Millions of laborers—men, women and children—were drafted from the villages to build roads and airfields in National China. Communist guerilla organization and fighting made large use of the ordinary farmer who in turn was promised land and material benefits. In all areas the war brought about a loosening of family ties, a weakening of ancient social customs and a lowering of old moral standards.

In National China the rural reconstruction movement that showed such promise before 1937 received both setback and impetus. Agricultural colleges had to be moved inland and hopeful

rural service experiments and training centers had to be abandoned. Dr. James Yen and staff of the Mass Education Movement left Tingsien. Nevertheless, the accumulated experience of twenty years in rural work was not lost but rather channeled into new fields. West China was rediscovered. Teachers and students of refugee schools lived closer than ever before to the common folk of the village. Rural credit cooperatives and industrial cooperatives brought benefits to many communities. New ideas were broadcast in the hinterland and a new national consciousness was awakened by the war. The interest of the National Government in all phases of rural welfare was intensified. A Ministry of Agriculture was established in 1941. A new *hsien* or county system was adopted calling for reforms in administration, education, public health, defense organization and the training of the people in self-government. The farmer began to achieve a new standing in society and in the life of the nation. In Communist areas he was a definite revolutionary force.¹

Losses and Gains in the Rural Church

No comprehensive statistics have yet been gathered on material losses but from available reports I conclude that at least 25 per cent of an estimated 10,000 rural churches in all China suffered serious property damage during the war years. These were for the most part in occupied territory or fighting zones. A few rural churches in Free China or regions near the fighting lines were bombed or looted.

Personnel losses are even more difficult to calculate. In ten years a considerable number of pastors and other church workers would be lost by death, ill health or age retirement. But there were also Christian rural workers and their families killed, injured or mistreated by the invading forces and driven upon the road. Others left the work of the church because of financial difficulties. The total loss is less than might have been expected. Pastors in occupied areas often stayed by their flocks at great personal danger and sacrifice. A study of 777 local churches (both city and rural) by the National Christian Council in 1946 revealed that 15 per cent of church workers left their fields of service during the war, 43 per cent of these because of insufficient financial support. Three-fourths of those who

¹ For a full interpretation of this development see: F. W. Price, "The War and Rural Construction," in *Wartime China as Seen by Westerners*, China Publishing Company, Chungking, 1942.

left were men or women who had received a lower grade of training. A much smaller proportion of rural than of city pastors from coastal provinces migrated westward and were used in churches of Free China. Altogether the loss of rural church leadership from all causes during the war years cannot have been less than one-third of the total number before the war. Workers in training today are insufficient even to make replacements. The National Christian Council study mentioned above showed that students now in theological and Bible schools are only one-fourth of the number being called for by the churches.

Many rural congregations were scattered during the war years, a larger number apparently in north China where the Japanese armies eliminated local leaders, wiped out hundreds of small villages and drove away the inhabitants. The Methodist Conference of North China reports 22 out of 27 rural churches in the Lanhsien District inactive and 19 out of 22 churches in the Tsunhua District inactive. In other areas where the rural church could carry on attendance upon meetings of worship was rendered more difficult, pastoral visitation and the service program of the church were curtailed, and pastors not only depended more upon gifts of food from their congregations but also had often to undertake outside work to supplement their income. When mission funds were entirely cut off after Pearl Harbor many pastors had to become self-supporting. Most serious in many cases has been the weakening of the religious education program and rural Christians have suffered from the lack of systematic Bible teaching and guidance in Christian living. Some became cold and left the church. Christian young men were drained away by the war effort. But in China as a whole rural church membership seems to have gained during the past ten years while the number of rural churches decreased. That the great majority of rural church leaders and members should have remained loyal to their faith and have continued their Christian witness during these ten distressing years is a cause of gratitude and joy. A very insignificant number apostatized because of persecution or joined puppet organizations.

Two examples may be given of the growth of rural churches under the Japanese occupation. In 1940 Mr. Chang Hsin-tien, a graduate of the Rural Church Department of Nanking Theological Seminary (then at Chengtu) returned from West China to his

home in Shanghai. He was appointed by the London Mission to a rural church at Tatuan, 30 miles from Shanghai. During the war the membership increased from 30 to about 150 and is now over 200. The church has an active comprehensive program reaching the whole community.

The South Fukien Synod of the Church of Christ in China reports a gain of 20 rural parishes and of a total rural church membership during the war. Dr. Luman J. Shafer upon his recent visit to this area was especially impressed with the church at Se-oan, a village of 600 population.² This village, formerly in the heart of a bandit area and with a bad local reputation, is now clean and prosperous-looking. On Sunday when Dr. Shafer was present there were 34 members and 100 inquirers in attendance. Forty were enrolled in the young people's group and several farmer boys sang in the church choir. Pastor Lin was the active and devoted leader.

Many rural churches held their own under lay leadership. An example of this type was the church at Shunhwachen, the training parish of Nanking Theological Seminary. Although this community 15 miles from Nanking was occupied successively by Japanese, puppet and New Fourth Army Communist troops; and part of the market-town including the church building was burned yet the congregation never missed a Sunday service under the leadership of Elder Yuan and other laymen. The Christians took care of the Seminary farm and their own church farm and maintained so faithfully the life of the church and its influence in the community that today the church faces a more hopeful future than ever before.

Rural churches as a whole seemed to have gained in quality of life and witness, in the responsibility felt by layworkers and in the spirit of Christian stewardship. When inflation and increase of prices to tens of thousands times the pre-war level is taken into account per capita financial contributions do not appear to have increased; in fact they may have decreased. But rural Christians are learning to give more in other ways. At Suchow, North Kiangsu, in the mission field of the Presbyterian Church U. S. (Church No. 1 in the 1937 survey was in this area) rural churches were maintained during the war by sacrificial giving of members and also by help from three shops under Christian managers in Suchow

² Shafer, Luman J. and Van Westenburg, Anthony: *Amoy Today*. A Deputation Report. Board of Foreign Missions, Reformed Church in America. N. Y. 1946. p. 34.

which tithed their annual income to assist the weaker churches in the country.

The rural church movement in west China definitely gained during the war. It was strengthened by the migration of refugee pastors and members from the coastal regions, and by the removal of many Christian educational and theological institutions to the interior. A new interest in Christian rural service developed. West China Union Theological College and Canton Union Theological College, temporarily located with Hwachung College in western Yunnan, added rural training departments with some assistance from Nanking Theological Seminary. The latter had rural church extension programs in Szechwan, Yunnan, Shensi and central China. A new and exceedingly fruitful venture was the Border Service Mission of the Church of Christ in China which enlisted great interest throughout west China and the volunteer service of many hundred college students. The work received high praise from the National Government. At the same time the missionary efforts of the English Methodists and other missions among the Miaos of Yunnan-Kweichow and other mountain tribes, a work which over several decades had done much to lift their educational and spiritual standard, won greater recognition and appreciation.

Finally, a number of important research projects bearing upon the rural church were carried on during the war years.

Survey of Szechwan Churches

A survey of the Christian movement in Szechwan, conducted by Nanking Theological Seminary in 1939, showed 13,653 Protestant church members in 499 city and rural churches. Whereas in all China the proportion of communicant Christians to the total population was 1:850, in Szechwan it was 1:3500. The population of Szechwan was 10.7 per cent of China's total population but the proportion of Christians in Szechwan to those in all China was only 2.6 per cent. Moreover, the growth of church membership between 1920 and 1929 had been only 5 per cent whereas in all China it had been 40 per cent. Szechwan Christian institutions—West China Union University, 25 Christian middle schools and 25 Christian hospitals—had developed far more rapidly than the local churches. One reason, it was discovered, was the generally weak condition of the rural churches which had not taken deep root in rural com-

munities. Not more than 40 per cent of Protestant communicants were rural people. Only one out of eight market-towns had churches or Christian worshipping groups, and the majority of the members in these were residents of the market-towns. Most town churches were failing to throw out "shoots" into the rural community about them.

Another survey five years later showed an increase of 30 per cent in church membership. This was due in part to immigrant Christians but also to new life in both city and rural churches, and better theological training for ministers and women evangelists. Since 1937 two strong theological schools with a rural emphasis have been established in Szechwan: West China Union Theological College at Chengtu and Chungking Seminary at Chungking. During the war several conferences of Christian rural leaders were held in Szechwan and other west China provinces, special literature for rural churches was prepared and published by the Canadian Press in Chengtu, and the *Christian Farmer* brought inland from Tsinan reached a wartime circulation of 20,000 copies throughout Free China.

The following description of encouraging wartime growth in Szechwan rural churches is taken from a report by the author:³

Three *li* from Tzeyang lives a big tenant farmer named Chang Chieh-chih. He rents 200 *mow* of fertile land along the river from a retired military official, and upon this raises a variety of crops. Many farm houses cluster around a spacious courtyard, and in these we found a typical large family, Mr. and Mrs. Chang, their four sons and four daughters-in-law, several grandchildren, and over ten farm laborers. There is a high average of culture in the home: Mr. Chang has had an old-type education but is modern enough to keep farm accounts; the sons have all been to school and one daughter-in-law is a middle school graduate. Mr. Chang and several members of his family are now inquirers. A primary school is being started here at the family's request and during the summer a theological student will live in the home. At Mr. Chang's request extension workers from the University of Nanking will visit him and talk with him about his farm management and methods and give him their counsel. This better type of farm family is becoming a rural branch of the Tzeyang church and a center of Christian influence in its own little rural society.

* * *

³ F. W. Price, "Rural Journeys in Szechwan," in *West China Missionary News*, July-August 1941.

As I travelled about Szechwan this spring, I found many rural churches throwing out new shoots, starting new cells of Christian witness and service, reaching from the church building and street into the great unevangelized country around the church center. Most rural churches are located in market-towns, although some, like the Methodist churches at Tien-kuo-chiao 80 *li* from Tzeyang and Pah-fu-tsun near Shih-chia-pa, and the Sheng Kung Hui (Anglican) Chapel at Mo-Chia-hang in Mienchu *hsien* are in the open country. But whether on a market street or surrounded by farm land the secret of life and growth seems to be constant extension into new neighborhoods and homes. The church cannot wait for the people to go to it; it must go to the people.

* * *

One of the most vital "Christian cells" that I saw had its center in the home of an earnest Christian farmer seven *li* from Chienyang. Ma Fu-chin received a new inspiration two years ago at a Lay Training Institute conducted by the Methodist Church and the Rural Extension Department of Nanking Theological Seminary. Upon his return home he started an evening school in his home and a Sunday School for children. I was deeply moved as I saw him telling these youth and children Bible stories and listened to the really fine singing of the group. Morning and evening he had family prayers in his home. He took me to visit other Christian families of the K'ang-chia-ho neighborhood, and when I saw the influence of this plain farmer with a Christian passion for service I was not surprised to learn that he had been appointed *pao-chang* (head of a hundred families). He has become a community leader as well as a church leader. At the same time he is industrious in his farm work and does his full share of the duties about the home. Such Christian homes give us boundless hope for the rural church.

* * *

The importance of the Christian family was again demonstrated at Kan-chiang-chen, a rural church of the Baptist Convention which has come to life again under the ministry of young Chu-Kuo-an. Here I found the only Christian home with five living generations that I have seen in China. The old great-great grandmother with whom we talked was 104 years old; she has since died. The great-grandmother aged 80 was the first Christian in the community and is still active. Her son in his fifties is a pillar of the church and a progressive farmer. The fourth generation is represented by a young school teacher over twenty who is also a deacon in the church. The fifth generation of little children will, we pray, carry on the tradition. Through many vicissitudes the church has carried on largely because of this and a few other families which are entirely Christian.

The Rural Church Behind the Fighting Lines

An inspiring example of the war's effect upon a rural church area near the fighting lines has been reported. Early in 1938 Rev. Chiu Chin-ling, pastor of the Stuart Memorial Church, Hangchow, Chekiang, evacuated with his family to Tung-yang *hsien*, a mountainous region of western Chekiang. There Pastor Chiu took charge of a scattered parish of thirty rural churches and chapels. These were mostly in Free China but at times the Japanese armies made incursions into the area and many towns and villages suffered from air raids and looting. Pastor Chiu travelled over his parish by bicycle until it was taken from him by a Japanese reconnaissance party and then by foot. When he returned to Hangchow in 1945 the number of churches had increased to forty. The net membership had grown in spite of losses from war conditions and a large corps of lay-leaders had been trained to carry on the work. The churches were self-supporting throughout this period and engaged actively in relief and other service to their communities.

The Rural Church After the War

The Japanese surrender restored communications between National Free China and the former occupied territories but intensified the struggle between the National and Communist armies especially in north China.

Church leaders who had refuged and missionaries who had been absent for years or interned in concentration camps now returned to their former fields of service in the liberated areas. Christian universities, middle schools and theological schools moved back to their former campuses. The North China Christian Rural Service Union began again to function. Other inter-church and denominational organizations made plans for rehabilitation and advance. Hopes were high for a new era in the rural church. Interest in the Christian message and program for the farmer has never been so widespread and compelling.⁴ In the spring of 1947 Mr. John Reisner, Executive Secretary of Agricultural Missions, Inc. visited China in the interest of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America and the Church World Service program for rural rehabilitation. In many areas Christian rural organizations cooperated heartily with U.N.R.R.A. and other relief and reconstruction agencies.

⁴ This judgment is confirmed in a recent letter to the author from Professor Samuel Chu of the Rural Church Department, Nanking Theological Seminary.

But there is another and darker side of the post-war picture. The rural church has been confronted with peculiar difficulties and baffling problems: abnormal political and economic conditions affecting all Christian work, continuing civil strife, general restlessness and discontent among both city and rural populations, the moral letdown that always follows a long war, and the growing seriousness of the Communist challenge.

In National China the Christian church enjoys almost unlimited freedom of religious assembly, worship, preaching and service. The difficulties are those which face all social and religious work in a period of inflationary prices and political instability. It is the general testimony that the rural church, if it had the leadership, the strong and earnest membership and the program, could enter a period of rapid growth and profoundly influence Chinese rural society and culture. It could furnish devoted leaders for the rural reconstruction movement, contribute good citizens to the nation and furnish a high faith and strong communal spirit to take the place of weakening old religions and social customs.

In the parts of north China under Communist control Christian churches are meeting a supreme test. During the war Christianity while denounced by orthodox Marxian Communists was not actively opposed. Communist leaders declared that they would welcome Christian physicians and social workers and promised religious freedom. But during the past year as the tension between the National Government and the Communists has heightened, the Christian church has become more and more the object of bitter persecution. Hundreds of pastors and Christians have been killed and thousands have been driven from their homes by the threat of mob trials. Many mission stations like that at Changli, Hopei, widely known centers of constructive service for the rural people, have been deliberately destroyed or looted. Impartial observers declare that Christian churches have suffered greater losses under the brief Communist rule than under the long years of Japanese occupation. The Communists will not brook any opposition to their ideology and radical revolutionary methods; the Christian church is linked in their eyes with the "anti-Russian bloc" and the strong Christian movement in National China and is therefore suspected and feared. The rural church in most Communist areas, covering about one-fourth of China, is being driven underground. About

twenty of the churches surveyed in 1937 are thus affected.

The Communist appeal in China is based upon its promises of agrarian reform and better living for the rural masses, and the failure of the National Government immediately to provide an efficient and incorruptible administration and a liberal social program weakens its defenses against Communist expansion. The tremendous growth of Communist influence in the past ten years can be seen by reading the results of the study of political factors in the environment of the church made in our earlier survey (see III, 4) and comparing the situation with that today.

Taken, however, as a challenge the Communist penetration may force needed reforms in the National Government, may inspire forward-looking liberals to greater and more united effort, and may give the Christian church in the end a greater message and mission. At the time of writing the situation within China is most precarious and anything may happen, for better or for worse. Only a Christian church with great faith, social vision, evangelistic zeal and sacrificial spirit will be able to triumph, not only under a Communist regime but also in the rest of China where peace and unity are sorely threatened.

A new constitution goes into effect for National China on December 25, 1947. The first national elections are to be held in November, 1947. Democracy needs intellectual, economic and moral foundations. Agricultural improvement, extension of literacy, education for self-government, rural welfare, justice for the farmer, the revitalization of Chinese culture, the restoration of faith and hope in the hearts of the people require not merely scientific techniques and political platforms but new moral and spiritual dynamic. This the rural church should help to give. It is close to the rural people, the masses of China, who must realize their economic, intellectual, political and spiritual rights and also assume their civic responsibilities as builders of new rural communities if China is to be saved.

A North China Church Ten Years After

One of the rural churches surveyed in 1936-1937 was the Peiyin Methodist Church, half way between Peiping and Tientsin (No. 33). It was founded in 1883 by a Christian returning to his native village. The Tien clan became the chief supporters of the church.

A new church building was erected in 1912, the local church and the mission each contributing one-half of the cost. In 1937 there were 143 members, 90 men and 53 women in a parish community of 38,700; that is, 1 in 270 were Protestant Christians compared with 1 in 850 for all China. Members lived in 15 villages, 78 of them within 5 *li* of the church. There were 53 families with at least one Christian, 59 second generation Christians and 20 third generation Christians. Of the 56 farmers in the church 20 were owners, 34 part-owners and 2 were tenants (the tenancy rate is very low in this region). Only 6 men and 7 women in the church were unable to read simple books so that the church could be considered 90 per cent literate, whereas in the *hsien* 50 per cent of the men and 10 per cent of the women were literate. The church had sent to middle schools and colleges 58 of its boys and 27 of its girls, 27 of the total number from the Tien clan alone. Four had become full-time Christian workers. The church in 1937 raised more than 90 per cent of the pastor's salary. An active service program was carried on. The community was relatively prosperous: 85 per cent of the land was under cultivation and no floods, droughts or famines had occurred for twenty years.

Then the war struck. There were years of Japanese occupation, 4 years of floods, years of Communist guerrilla activity, and since the war disturbed conditions due to the National-Communist struggle and constant threats of Communist violence. Work animals and carts are gone. Large sections of farm land are uncultivated. Harvests have been much reduced. Former middle class farmers are now among the poorest. Vegetable gardens are few. Most of the people eat a cheap cereal diet and little else.

The former pastor is dead. The church buildings are in bad disrepair. Church attendance has been reduced to twenty or thirty each Sunday. A new young pastor has come to serve in an impoverished community. But, Miss Lane writes, "The Peiyin church will rise again. Its roots are deep in the community where it has witnessed and served."⁵

The story of the Peiyin Church reveals vividly the devastating effects of the ten years since 1937 in a land still bleeding from war and the terrific difficulties and dangers yet to be faced in rehabilitat-

⁵ From recent report by Miss Ortha Lane who made the survey of this church in 1937.

ing the rural churches of north China. If peace and unity come to China the wonderful recuperative powers of the Chinese people will assert themselves and the nation will leap forward. If the general situation worsens the rural church movement will inevitably meet further trials and setbacks. I dare to hope that in 1957 there may be at least one thousand strong, self-supporting community-serving rural churches in all China with well-trained and devoted leadership. But even such a limited goal will require for its achievement a greater concentration of effort, a better training of Christian rural workers and a deeper devotion to Christian rural evangelism and service than we now have.

The Christian Church should contribute to rural reconstruction in China scientific techniques of agriculture and industrialization, Christian ideas in political and economic action and an unselfish devotion to the best interests of the great agricultural population. The main channel of such service will be through the Christian rural churches and agencies closely related to the churches such as the North China Christian Rural Service Union and other regional fellowships of Christian rural workers. The time has come for a Christian philosophy of rural reconstruction and agrarian reform and a Christian theology for the rural church to undergird such a great task. Also, there must be a daring adventuresomeness, the old missionary pioneer spirit in the new conditions of post-war China, together with whole-hearted cooperation of all the Protestant forces if the rural church is to meet its opportunity in this critical period.

Two interesting and provocative proposals have been put forward recently by outstanding Christian scholars of China which show the concern of liberal intellectual leaders for the physical and spiritual needs of the rural people. President Francis Wei of Hwachung College pictures the future rural church in China as a four-center church.⁶ "The social genius of the Chinese is to be found in the small compact community of intimate personal relationships. Sometimes it is the village, sometimes the clan, and very often it is just the neighborhood. The Christian group will be a small minority in a non-Christian community. We call this group the church cell." This cell may meet in a home or a public building. It should have a family atmosphere and meet social as well as religious needs.

⁶ Wei, Francis C. M. *The Spirit of Chinese Culture*, Scribner's, New York, 1947. pp. 160-172.

Volunteer workers would be in charge unless the group could afford to have a full-time paid minister. The second center would be where several cells unite to form a Christian social service center. "It must be a genuine expression of the spirit of service of the sponsoring cells and it must be always sensitive to local needs." The third center is the Christian college, center of Christian thinking and planning. It must keep the Church "intellectually alive and alert." The fourth center is the center of Christian pilgrimage. Here Dr. Wei draws upon Buddhist and Taoist traditions. "Should not the Chinese Christians have their centers of pilgrimage as well? . . . Eventually there may be hundreds of them in the whole country." Each would embrace a cathedral for worship, a Christian cemetery, a Christian library and hotel. Such Christian shrines would be especially attractive at the times of great Christian festivals and would draw both farmers and scholars from near and far who would receive here illumination and inspiration.

Dr. T. C. Chao, Dean of the School of Religion of Yenching University, and writer of a popular book of rural hymns, recently suggested that well-trained lay-leaders in rural churches be ordained so that they could administer the sacraments and give needed spiritual leadership under the supervision of well-educated rural pastors serving larger areas. He also proposed that a Protestant religious order be formed of consecrated graduates of theological schools who would take vows of celibacy for three to five years in their early ministry and thus be able to serve rural churches at little cost without the financial burden of a family.⁷

Rehabilitation of the Rural Church in China

Mr. John H. Reisner, Executive Secretary of Agricultural Missions, Inc. made the following recommendations upon his return from an extended eight months trip to the Far East:⁸ (1) Concentration of power to do the job adequately, as power is concentrated in a Christian college or hospital. (2) Recognition that Christian discipleship is achieved principally in family and home relationships, in the way a livelihood is gained as farmer, laborer, weaver, carpenter, sweeper, and in our near and far community relationships.

⁷ An address at a special luncheon sponsored by the Board of Founders of Nanking Theological Seminary, New York, June 4, 1947.

⁸ Reisner, John H. "Preliminary Report on Mission to India and the Far East," *Agricultural Missions Notes*, Numbers 62 and 63, Spring and Summer, 1947.

Christian witness is effective only to the degree to which Christian discipleship has been achieved. (3) The building of comprehensive and integrated village programs around the total needs of the village. (4) United, cooperative endeavor; therefore a number of adequately staffed and financed Christian Village Service and Training Centers.

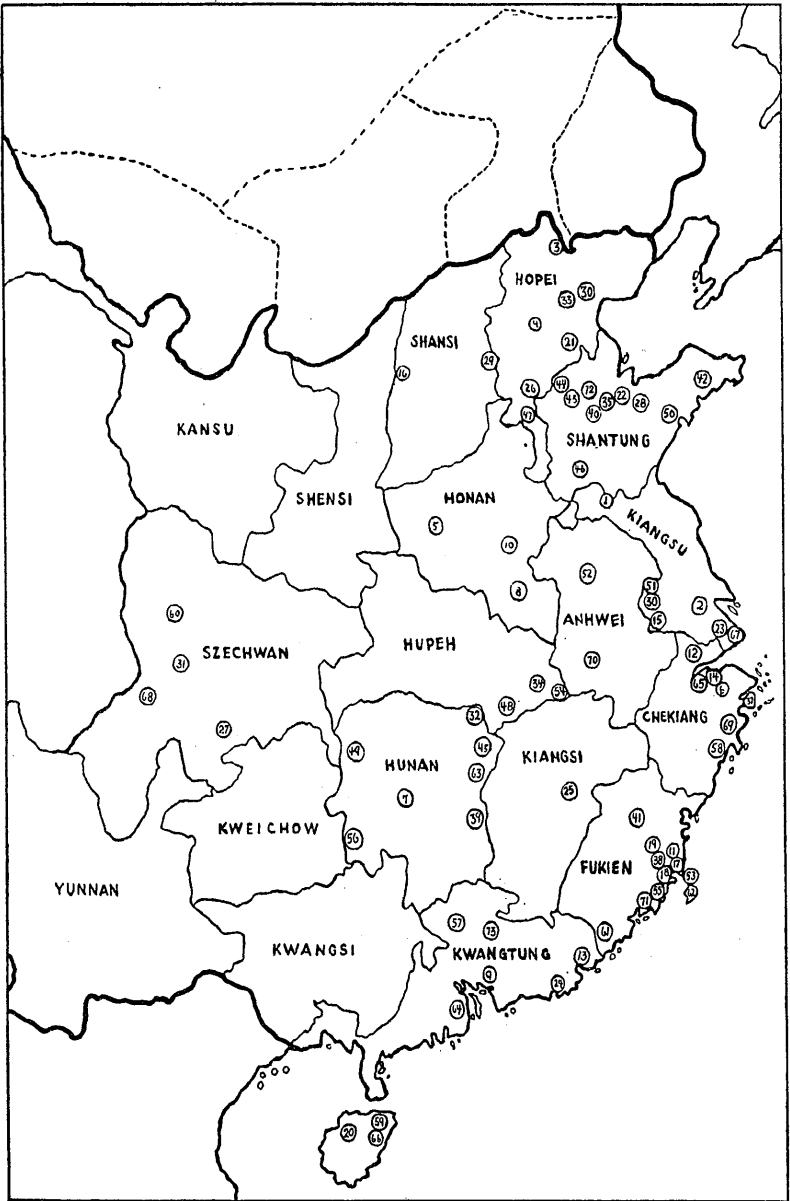
Mr. Reisner mentioned three major problems: (1) The most serious is that of adequately trained and experienced personnel. (2) The second is that of cooperation and pooling of resources. (3) The third problem is one of integration. "How do we integrate our program for better agriculture and for religious nurture and worship? We have farmers who are Christians but how many Christian farmers who understand the hand of God in all their farm operations, whose experience as farmers leads them to an understanding and consciousness of God in their daily work?"

"We must rediscover the interrelationships and the wholeness of life. God is both Creator and Redeemer. Secularism has no place in God's world except we put it there. A Christian program must be Christian through and through; all of life must be integrated in it, and all of life's needs must be met by it. Otherwise it is only partially Christian . . . Christianity will never be established until it is rooted in the village family and in the rural community."

MAPS

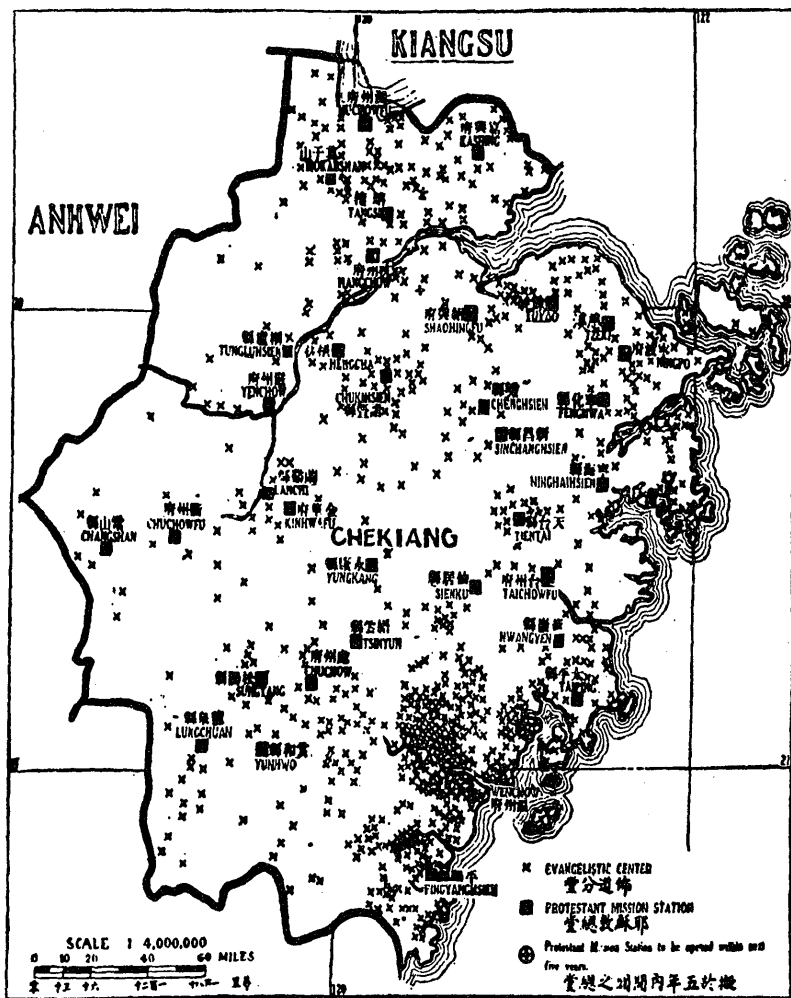


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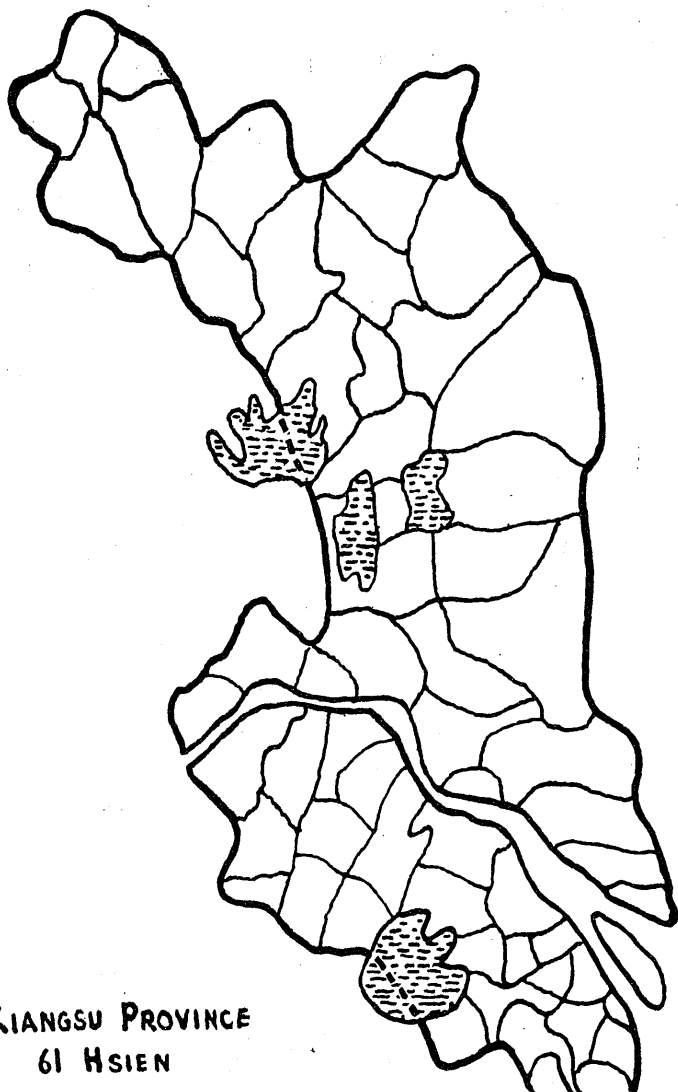


MAP I.—Location of 73 sample rural communities and churches in Survey II. (Numbers refer to the key list in the Introduction)

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA



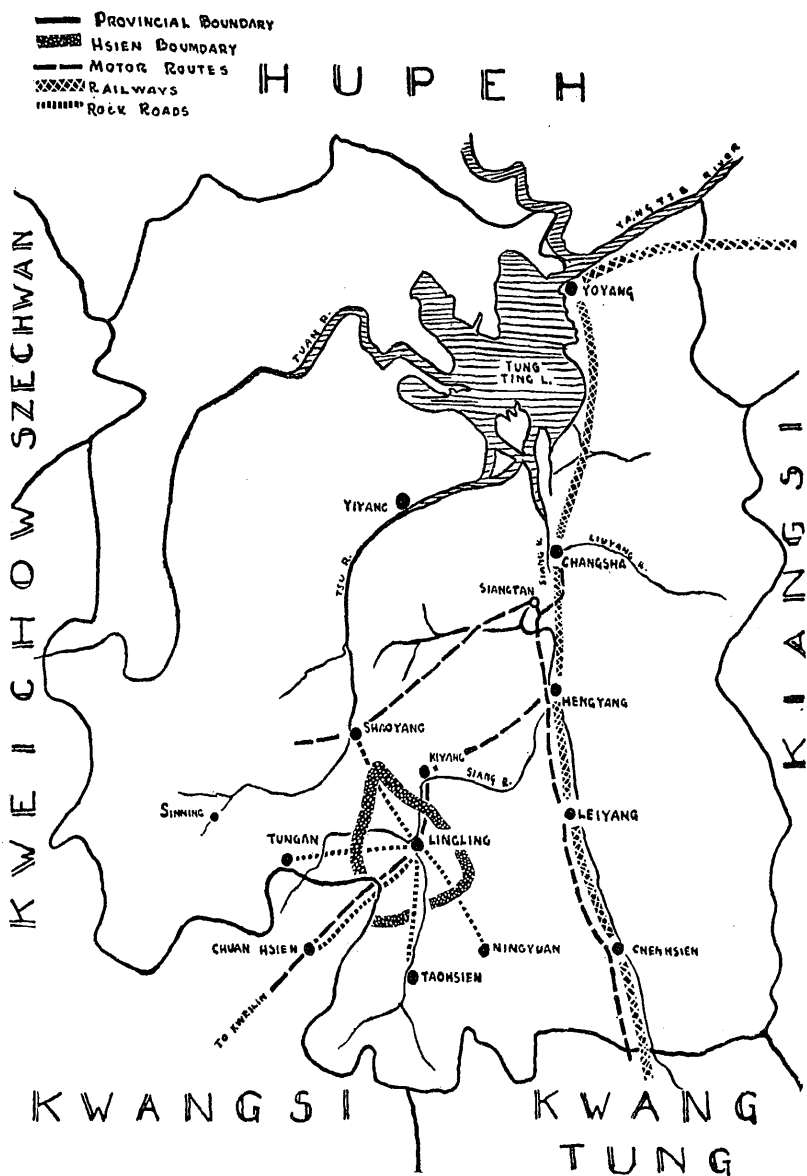
MAP II.—Distribution of rural churches in Province of Chekiang, in 1922. (From *The Christian Occupation of China*)



KIANGSU PROVINCE
61 HSIEN

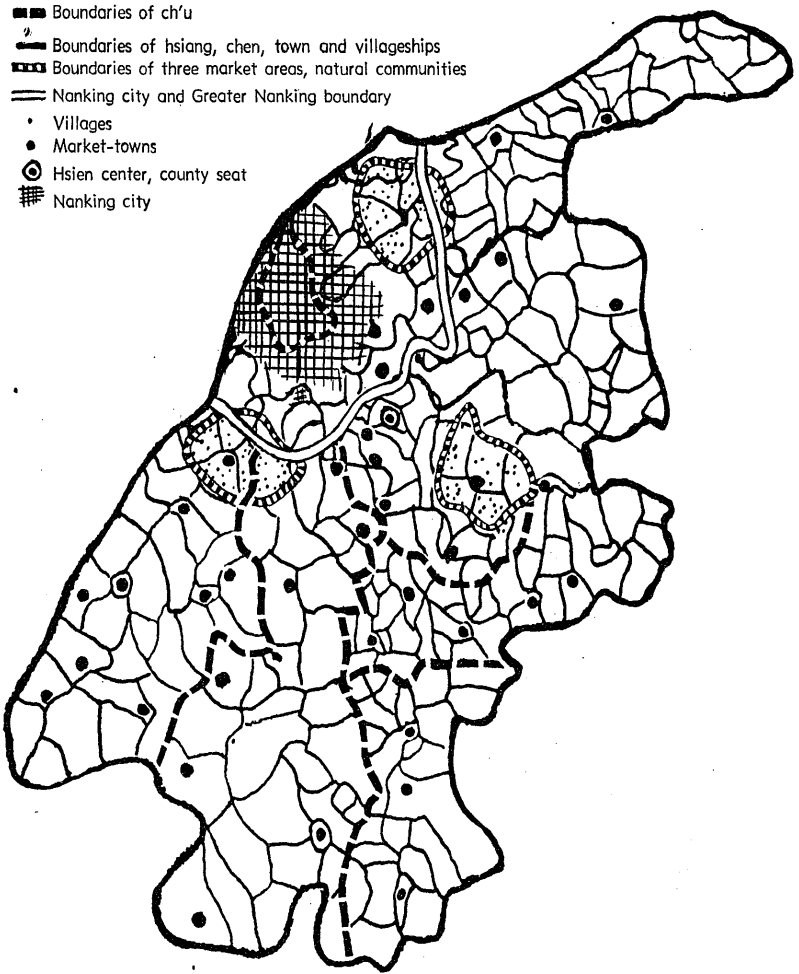
MAP III.—Showing a province divided into *hsien*. (Kiangsu Province, 61 *hsien*). The boundaries of the *hsien* follow natural lines, population groups and economic areas to a considerable extent. The *hsien* at the densely populated mouth of the Yangtze River, near Shanghai, are much smaller than those in the northern part of the province. Each *hsien* has a *hsien* city or county seat.

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA



MAP IV.—Sample map of one province showing railway, waterway and motor road communications with one *hsien* in the survey. (Ling Ling Hsien, Hunan)

MAPS



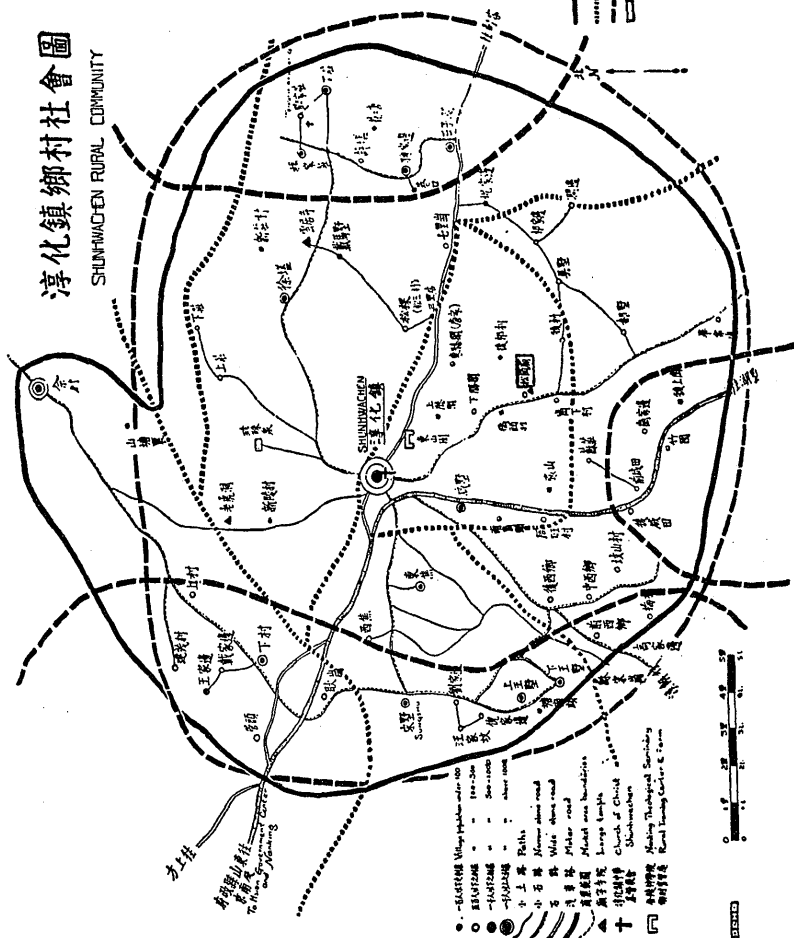
MAP V.—Sample map of one *hsien* showing divisions into *Ch'u* and *Hsiang*, market-towns and boundaries of three natural communities. Kiangning *Hsien* near Nanking. Nanking City is in upper left corner of map, Shunhwachechen Community (Church No. 30) is in central right part of map

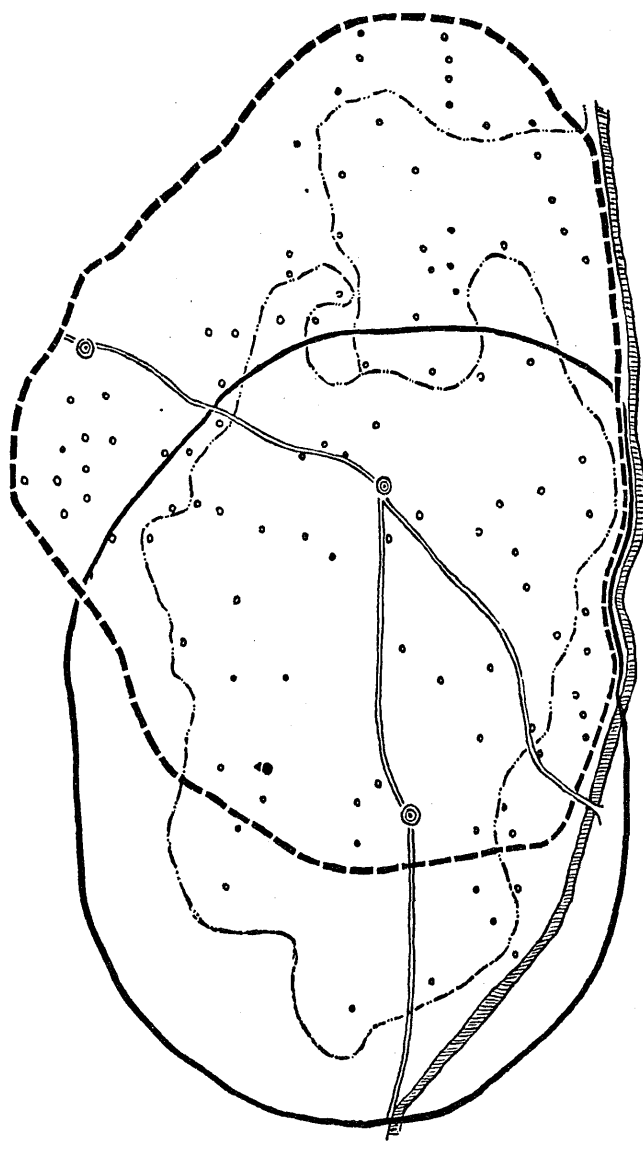


Map VI.—Map of a typical small market-town. (Shunhwachen, Ku., Pop. 2077, Community No. 30)

淳化鎮鄉村社會圖

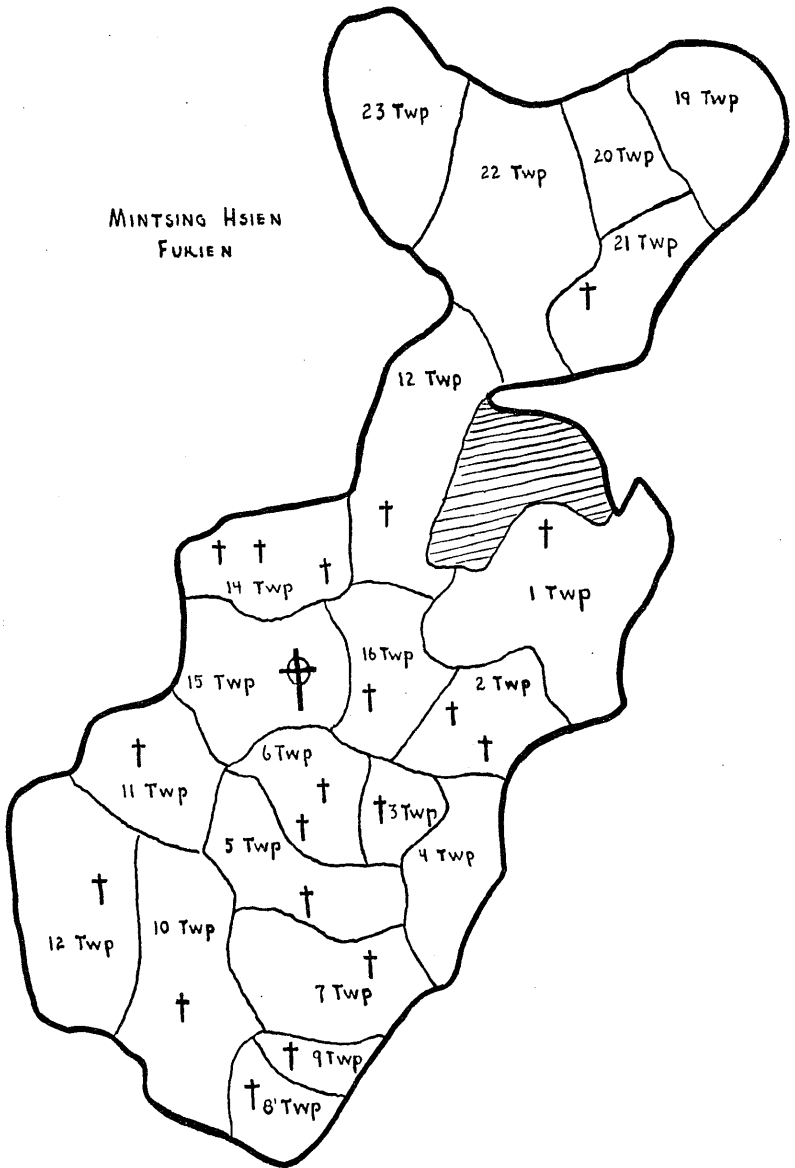
SHUNHWACHEN RURAL COMMUNITY





MAP VIII.—Sample parish showing overlapping of *Hsiang*, natural community and parish lines. (Chuye, Shantung, Church No. 46)

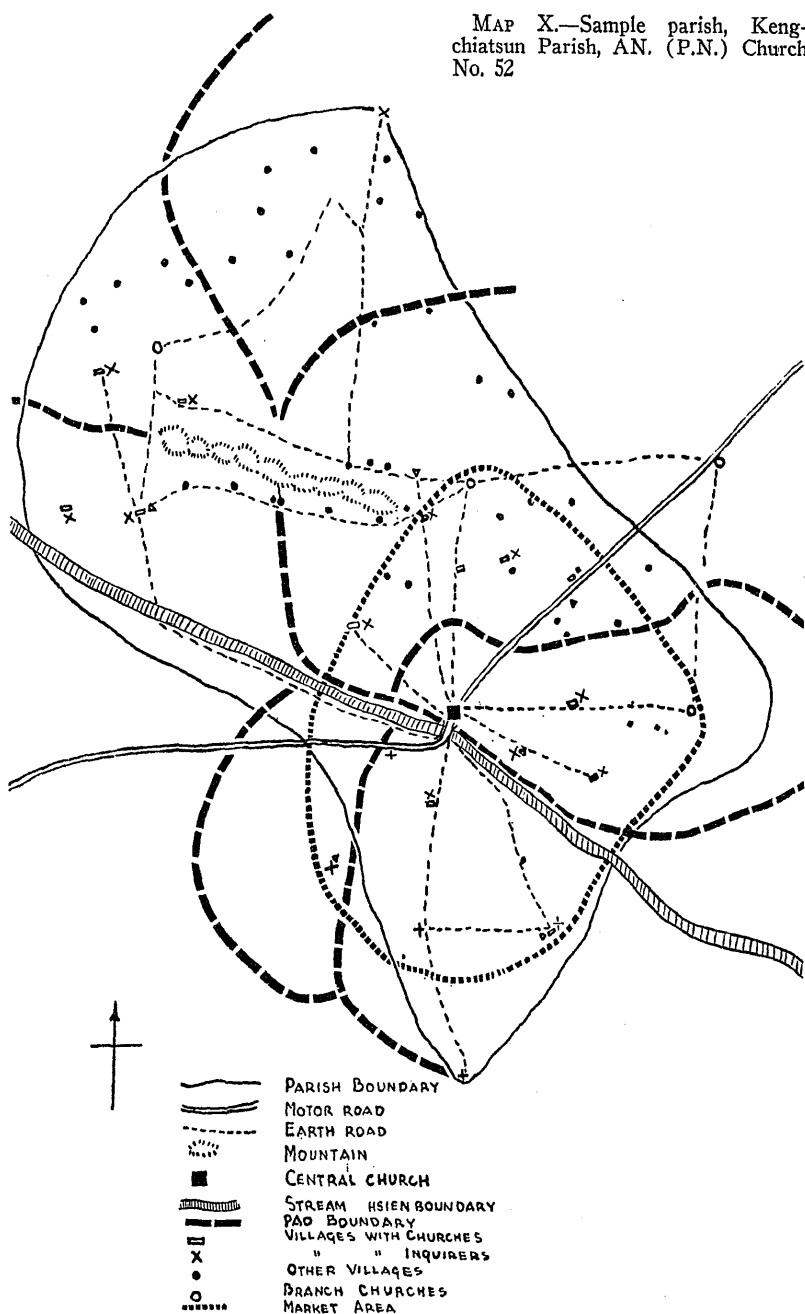
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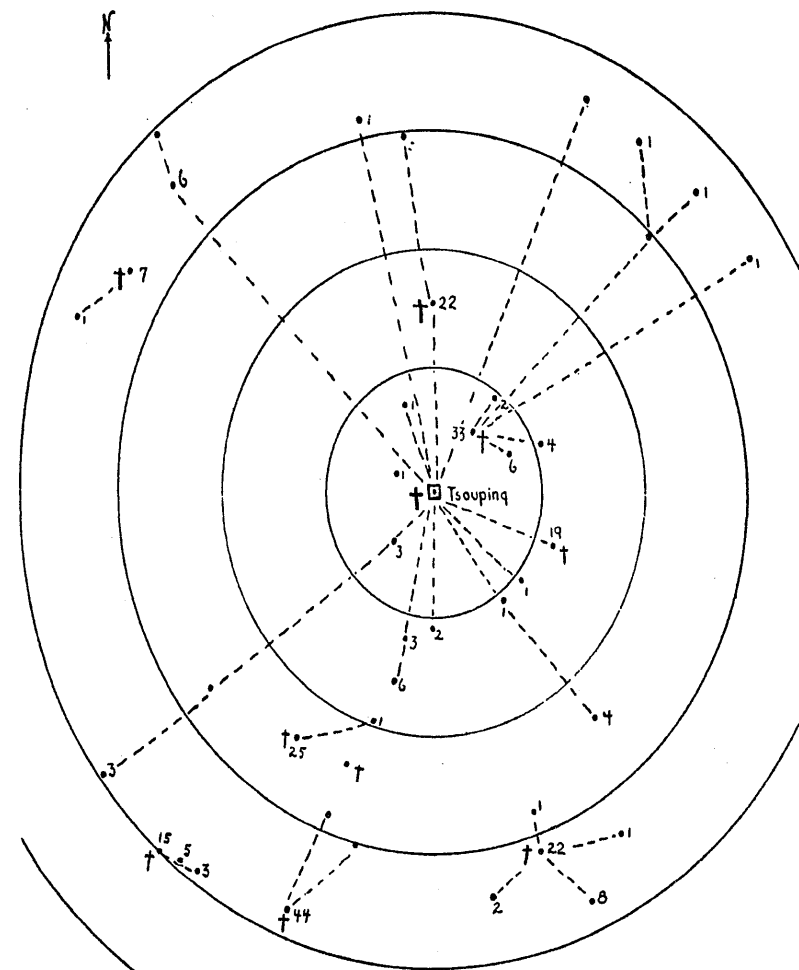


MAP IX.—Sample Parish Map of Mingsing *Hsien*, Fukien, showing 20 Methodist Churches in the *Hsien*. Most of the people in this *hsien* live in the open country rather than in villages. A township (twp) is a sub-division of the *hsien* and comprises scattered farmsteads. Churches are known by the township in which they are located. 15th Twp. Church with branch in 16th Twp. is Church No. 19 in the Survey

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA

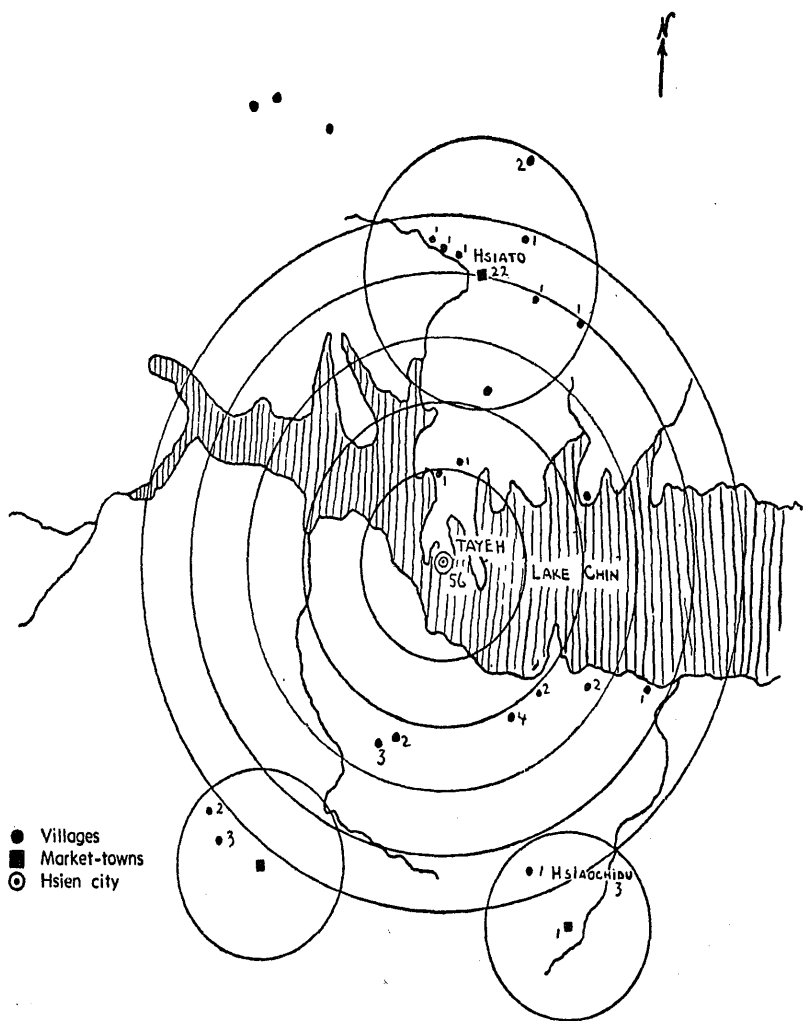
MAP X.—Sample parish, Keng-chiatsun Parish, AN. (P.N.) Church No. 52





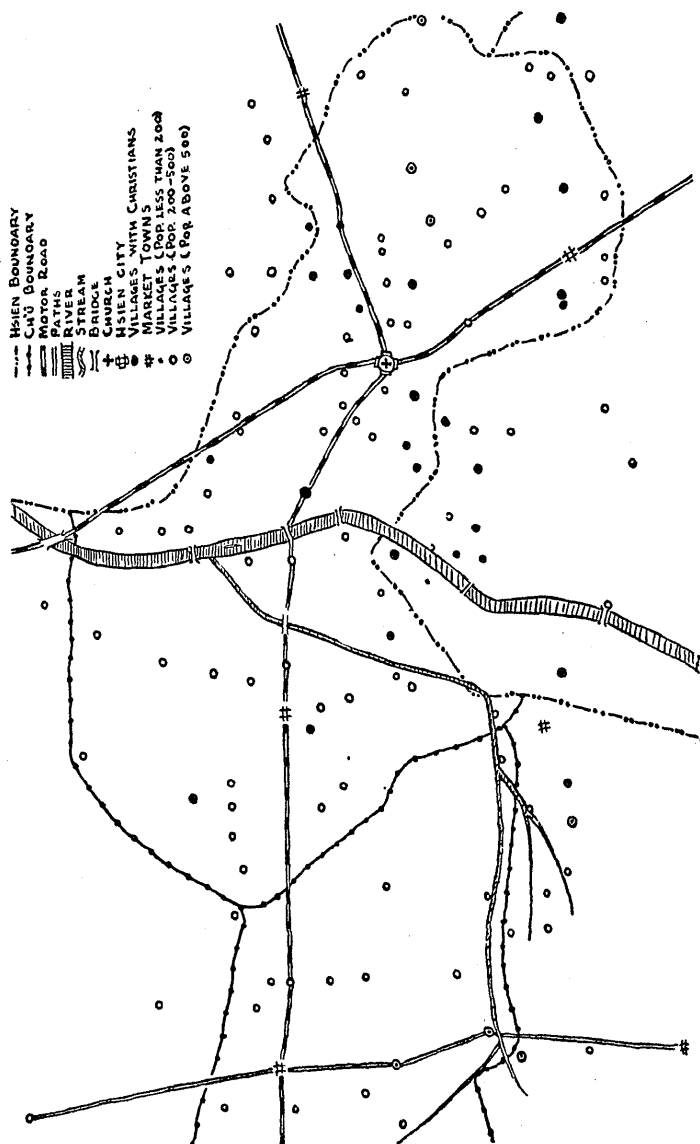
MAP XI.—Sample parish, Tsouping Parish, Shantung (E.B.M.) Church No. 35, showing central church and 9 branch churches in villages. Each circle represents 5 *li* (1.7 miles) Tsouping is the *hsien* city and central market. Branch churches are indicated by crosses, number of Christians by numerals. Dotted lines indicate where Christians go for worship

THE RURAL CHURCH IN CHINA



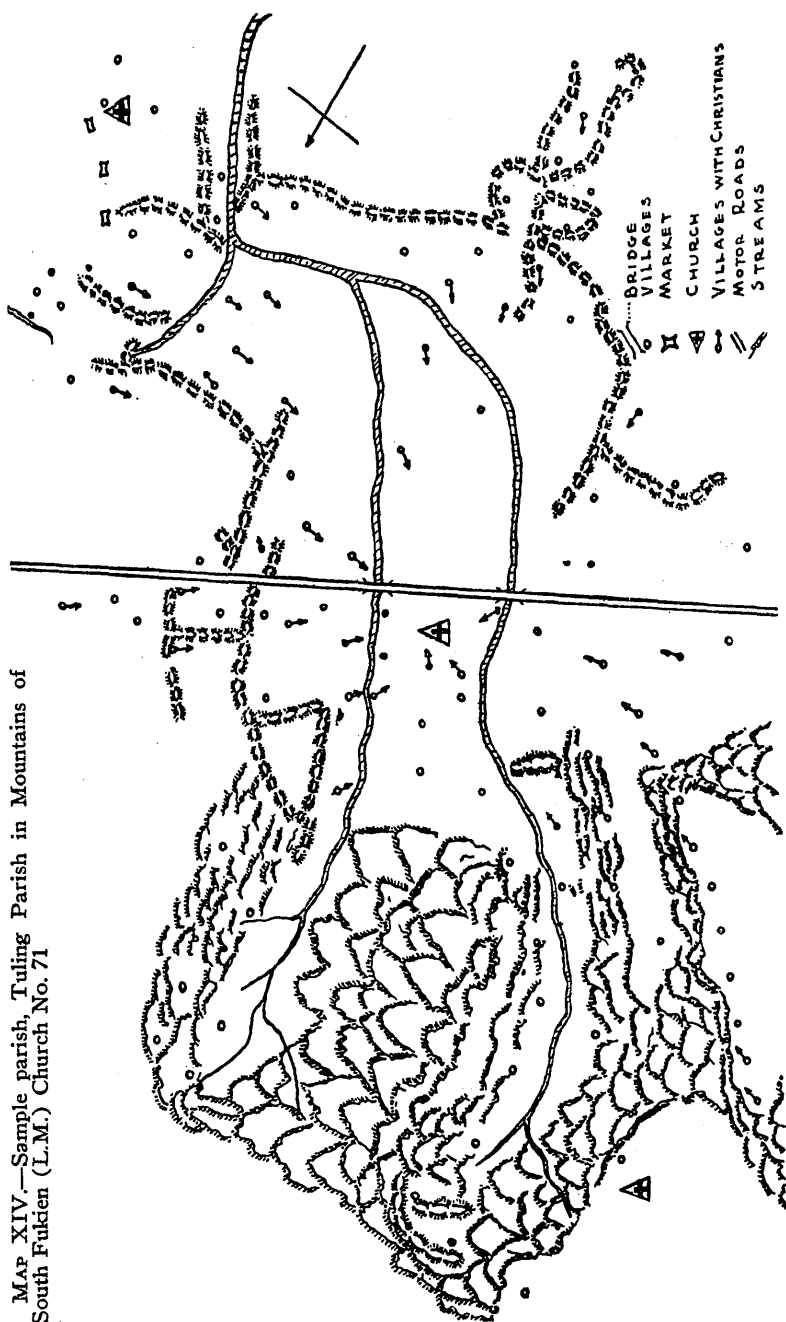
MAP XII.—Sample parish, Tayeh, Hupeh (M.M.S.) Church No. 34, showing central church and branch churches. Each circle represents 5 li (1.7 miles). Small circles indicate area of branch churches. Numbers indicate Christians in villages.

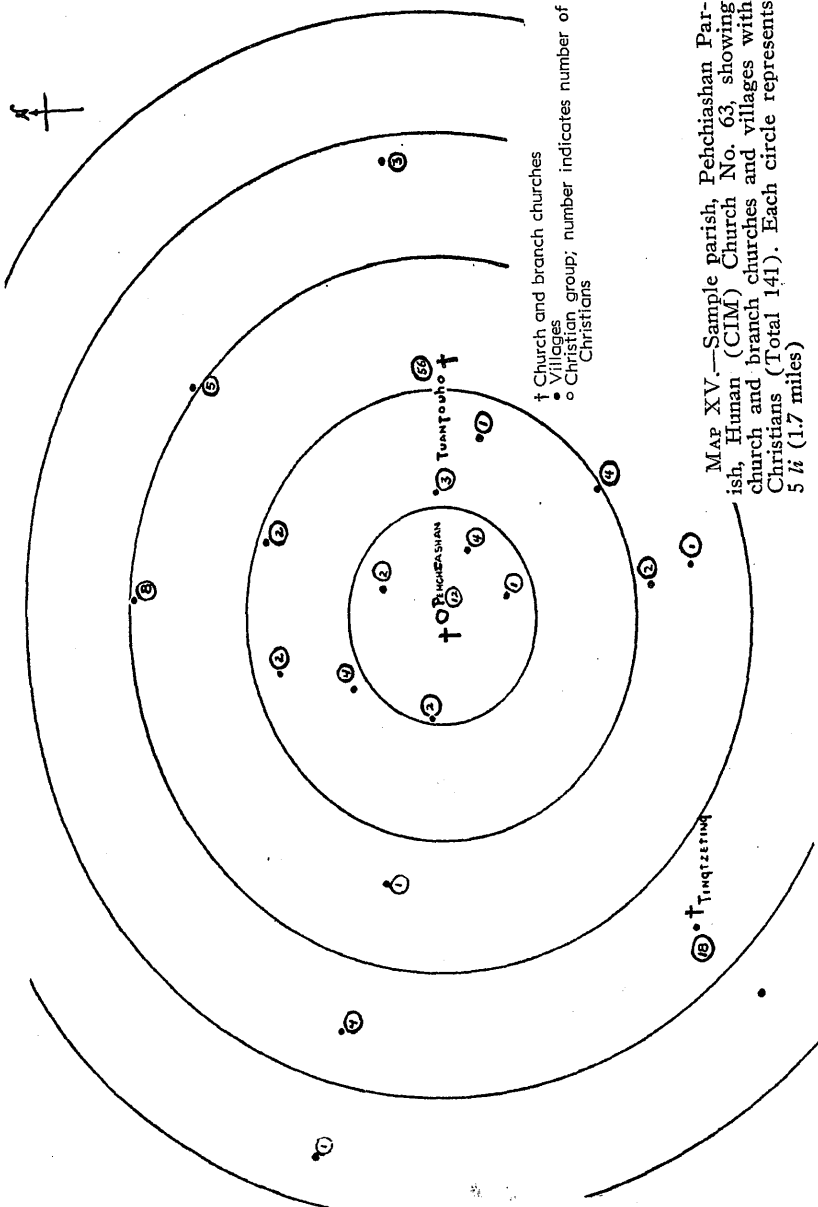
MAPS



MAP XIII.—Sample parish, Chipping Parish, Shantung (ABCFM) Church No. 44

MAP XIV.—Sample parish, Tuling Parish in Mountains of South Fukien (L.M.) Church No. 71

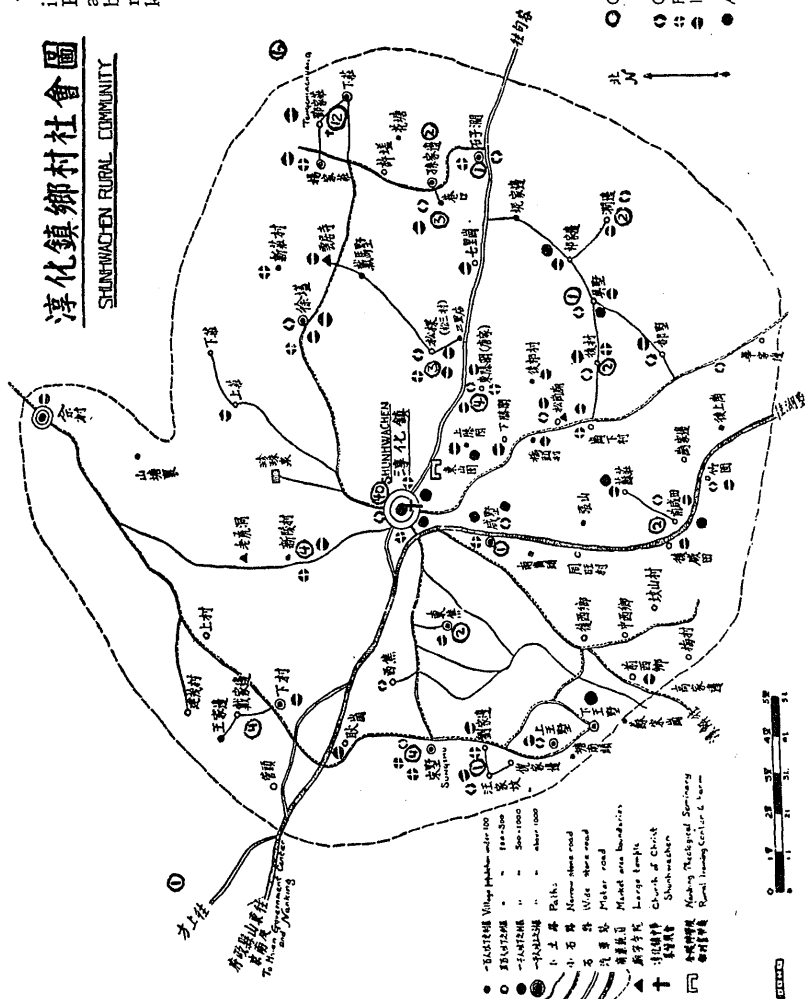




MAP XV.—Sample parish, Pehchiashan Parish, Hunan (CIM) Church No. 63, showing church and branch churches and villages with Christians (Total 141). Each circle represents 5 li (1.7 miles)

MAP XVI.—Sample parish, Shunhwachen Parish, Ku., showing village groups and organizations promoted by Shunhwachen Church and rural training center of Nanking Theological seminary

SHUNHACHEN RURAL COMMUNITY



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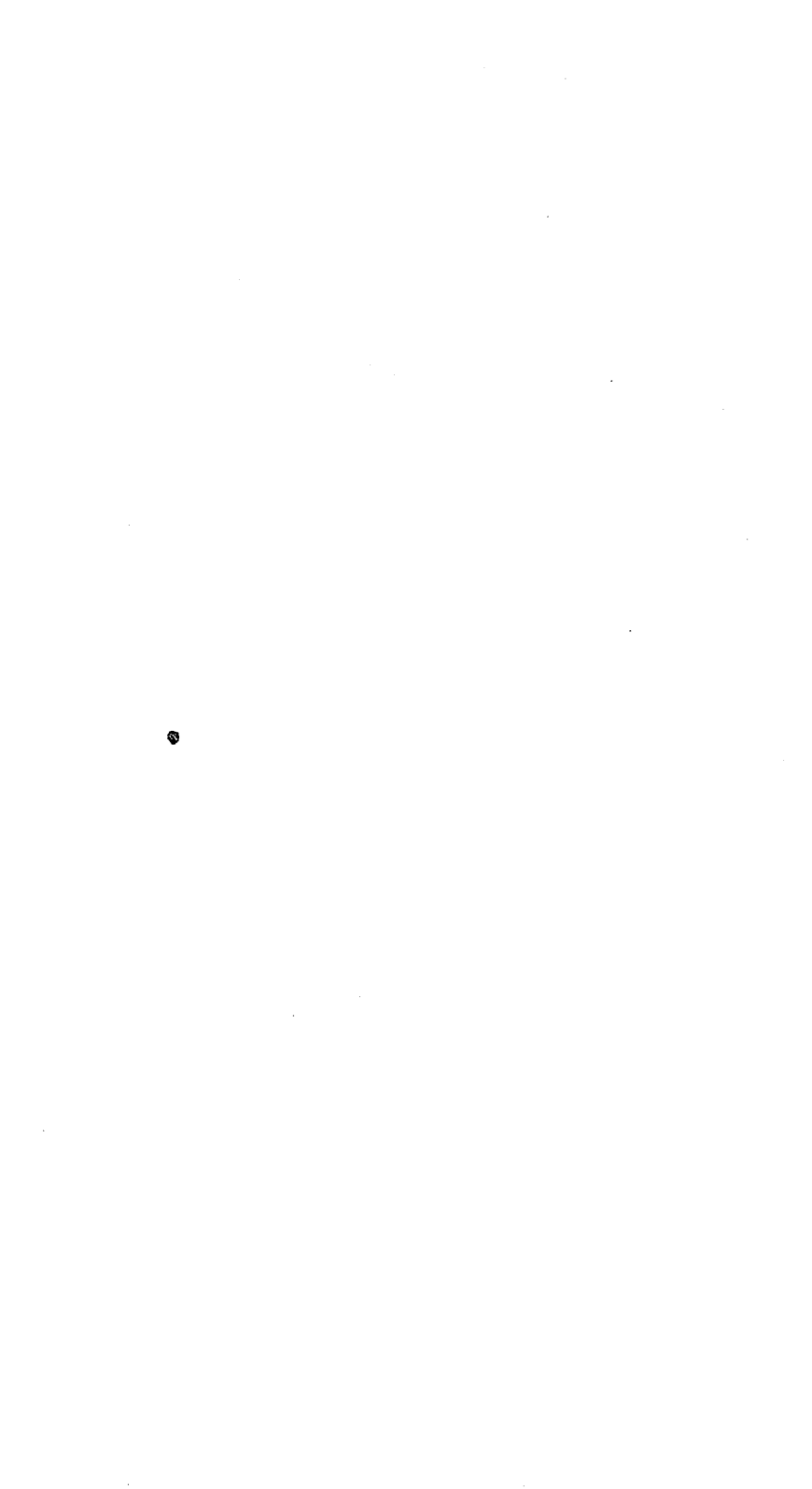
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INDEX



INDEX

- Abandoned churches, 81.
 Acknowledgments, 9, 10.
 Adult education, 68-69.
 Age distribution, 100-101.
 Agricultural education, 54.
 Agricultural Missions, Inc., 235.
 Agricultural needs, 56.
 Agriculture, 53-55.
 American Baptist Mission, 155.
 Ancestor worship, 78, 203.
 Anderson, W. A., 4, 95, 96, 100, 133, 154, 191.
 Anhwei, Kiangsu, Chekiang Survey, 13-21.
 Anti-foreignism, 52.
 Augustana Synod, 155.

 Basel Mission, 26.
 Benevolent gifts, 151.
 Bible classes, 188-189.
 Bible study, 103-104, 110, 200.
 Border Service Mission, 232.
 Branch churches, 87, 116-117.
 Brunner, E. S., 5, 122.
 Buck, J. Lossing, 4 ftn., 6, 39, 49, 57, 154, 158.
 Butterfield, Kenyon S., 4.

 Canadian Press, 233.
 Canton Union Theological College, 232.
 Case Studies of 73 Rural Churches (See Intensive Survey of 73 Rural Churches), 27.
 Chang, Fuliang, 6.
 Chang Hsin-tien, 230.
 Changli, 177.
 Chao, T. C., 115, 240.
 Cheeloo University School of Theology, 27.
 Chen, W. Y., Forward by, v.
 Chiao, C. M., 48.
 Children, 105-106, 204-205; work for, 205-207.
 China Inland Mission, 18, 20, 26, 85, 118, 155.
 Chinese characters (ideographs), 175.
 Chinese church bodies reported in survey, 25, 35.
 Chiu Chin-ling, 235.
 Christian Endeavor Society, 193.
 Christian faith and character, 199.
 Christian family, 201-205; Christian clans, 205; family worship, 202; home improvement, 202.
Christian Farmer, The, 176 ftn., 202, 233.
 Christian Home Week, 204.
 Christian literature, 203.
 Christian Literature Society, 176 ftn., 225.
Christian Occupation of China, The (1922 Survey), 3, 18, 19, 144.
 Christian rural movement, 225-226; rural reconstruction, 226.
 Christian villages, 96.
 Christmas observance, 215.
 Chu Chin-ih, 187 ftn.
 Chung Hwa Sheng Kung Hui (Anglican Church), 26, 145, 188.
 Chungking Seminary, 233.
 Church attendance, 104.
 Church calendar, 215.
 Church committees, 140-141.
 Church constituency, 111-112.
 Church construction, 152.
 Church debts, 159.
 Church extension, 116, 222.
 Church farm, 164.
 Church government, 139.
 Church membership, 182-184; care of new Christians, 188; effect of war upon, 230; men's organization, 193; method of reception, 184-185; problems, 96, 197; requirements for admission, 182-184; training of members, 188-200; women's organization, 193.
 Church Missionary Society, 18, 20, 117, 155.
 Church of Christ in China, 25, 26.
 Church officers, 139-140.
 Church of the Brethren, 25, 155.
 Church program, emphasis, 91.
 Church program, community service, 216-220; education, 172-174; extensive vs. intensive program, 172; plan, 169-170; policy, 170-171; primary schools, 173-174; religious education, 174-209; simple vs. comprehensive program, 171-172; Sundays and special days, 209-216.
 Church workers, 136-137.

INDEX

- Church World Service, 235.
Church Vacation Schools, 206.
Circuit system, 120, 122, 137.
Clark, S. J. W., 144, 156.
Communication and transportation, 66.
Communism, 52, 228, 236; effect upon rural church, 236-237.
Communists, 107, 208.
Community service, 216-220; service program of church, 219-220, 223; service projects, 217-218.
Cooperative societies, 58.

Davis, J. Merle, 6, 7, 10.
Day, C. B., 78.
Denominational organization and supervision, 117-123.
Diet, 65.
Distribution of church members, 3; of church workers, 3; of missionaries, 3.
Distribution of Rural Churches, East China, 13-20.

East China Rural Church Survey, 13-20; interpretations and conclusions, 14, 18-20; procedure, 13; tables, 15-17.
Economic status of church members, 101-102.
English Baptist churches, 138.
English Methodist Mission, 18, 26, 120, 137, 145, 155, 188, 232.
Environment of the Rural Church, 45ff.
Equipment in churches, 114-116.
Evangelical Church Mission, 25.
Evangelism, 85, 86, 91, 194, 224.
Evangelists, traveling, 122.
Extensive Survey of East China Churches, 13-21.

Faith Mission, 13.
Families, 59, 95-96; Christian families, 96, 105-106.
Famines, 46, 47.
Farm, business, 55-56; capital, 55; credit, 58; crops, 53-54; expenditures, 57; expenses, 55-56; labor, 54; receipts, 55; size of, 53.
Farm-study clubs, 177, 180.
Fellowship and mutual aid, 209.
Felton, Ralph A., 7, 164.
Festivals, observance of, 214-216.
Finance, effect of war upon, 230.
Finance, Rural Churches, 142-168; accounting, 161; church farm, 164; church land, 163-164; comparison with non-Christian religious contributions, 157; comparison with U.S.A. churches, 160; expenditures, 148; financial campaigns, 165; "growing church money," 164; improvements and repairs, 149; increase in contributions, 159; items in income and expenditure, 147; Lord's Acre plan, 163; member contributions, 153-159; methods of raising and disbursing funds, 160; new construction, 149; opinions on methods, 162-165; relation to other factors, 157; sources of income, 147; special projects, 149.
Freedom between sexes, 61.
Fry, C. L., 5.

Geographical and Topographical Factors in Rural Communities, 46-47.
Gods, 76-78.
Gospel Village, 205.
Growth of church membership, 106-108; reasons for, 107.

Handbook of the Christian Movement in China, (1936), 25.
Hartshorne, Hugh, 10.
Health conditions, 64-66; cost of health maintenance, 65.
Hinghwa Methodist Conference, 103.
History of rural communities, 45-46.
Hodous, L., 80 ftn.
Hospitals, 65.
Hsien cities, 48; population, 51.
Hsien (District), average population, 37; sub-divisions, 37, 39.
Hsu, Leonard S., 6, 39, 42.
Hsu, P. C., 219-220.

Immigrants, 99-100.
Infant mortality, 49.
Inquirers, Chinese terms for, 178; curricula, 180, 185; difficulties in enlisting, 185; difficulties in training, 186; enlisting and enrolling, 179; method of reception, 184; obstacles before, 186; period of probation, 180; qualifications, 179; training classes, 181; training of, 178.
Inquirers and Catechumens, 108-111; age distribution, 110; occupations, 109; definition, 108; literacy, 110; number in churches, 109; sources, 111, standards, 108.

INDEX

- Intensive Survey of 73 Rural Churches, 23-226; classification by Chinese Church Bodies, 35; classification by Missionary Societies, 34; classification by provinces, 34; list of churches surveyed, 29-33; method of survey, 23; outline of survey, 23-24; reliability of data, 25-29; surveyors, 27, 29-33; types of churches, 27.
- International Missionary Council, vii, 2; cooperation with Nanking Theological Seminary in Survey, 6; Department of Industrial and Social Research, 6.
- Jerusalem Conference of I.M.C., 4.
- Jones, Thomas Jesse, 5.
- Kiangning *hsien*, 18, 58, 67.
- Kindergartens, 207.
- Korean Church, 143 ftn.
- Kulp, D. H., 46.
- Kung Li Hui (Congregational), 26, 155, 177.
- Kuomintang*, 52.
- Lacy, Carleton, 103.
- Land, rent, 57-58; tax, 58; tenure, 57.
- Lane, Ortha, 238.
- Latourette, K. S., 1, 10, 85.
- Lay leaders, 90.
- Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, 4.
- Lay-workers, 137-139; training of, 142.
- Leaders, rural churches, 123.
- Leadership, in rural communities, 69-73; influence of leaders, 71-72; types of leaders, 70.
- Leadership training, 224.
- Lee, Handel, 9.
- Lewis, Ida Belle, 173.
- Liang Shu-ming, 45, 46.
- Lieu, D. K., 48.
- Lighting in churches, 115.
- Literacy, 68, 102-104.
- Literacy education, difficulties, 177; of Christians, 174-178.
- Loans and credits, 58.
- "Local preachers," 137.
- London Mission, 144, 155, 156, 231.
- Lord's Acre plan, 163.
- Lyons, D. Willard, 6.
- McLaughlin, W. C., 156.
- Madras Conference of I.M.C., 2, 6.
- Mallory, W. H., 46.
- Maps (community and parish), 39-40, Appendix.
- Market area, population, 42; size, 42; villages in area, 42.
- Market center, 58.
- Market or fair days, 215-216.
- Marriage of Christians, 204.
- Mass Education Movement, 68, 175, 176, 195, 229.
- Mateer, C. W., 143, 144.
- Member contributions, 153-159.
- Membership of rural churches, age distribution, 100-101; children, 105; church attendance, 104; church constituency, 111-112; distance from church, 97-98; economic status, 101; educational status, 102-104; families of members, 95-96; growth, 105-108; growth of membership, 90; impression of members, 105; inactive members, 95; influential members, 104-105; inquirers, 108-110; maps of, 93; number of members, 94-95; occupations, 98-99; proportions of immigrants, 99-100; ratio to parish population, 97; second generation Christians, 102; sex distribution, 94-95; statistics, 106.
- Methodist Church, South, 26, 145.
- Methodist Episcopal Mission, 18, 20, 26, 145, 155, 177, 230, 234, 237-239.
- Miao, Chester S., 6.
- Ministry of Agriculture, 229.
- Ministry of Education, 67.
- Missionaries, 86, 118, 119, 120, 209.
- Missionary societies reported in survey, 25, 34.
- Mohammedanism, 80.
- Moral conditions, 72-76; prevalence of bad or anti-social behavior, 74-76.
- Morse, H. N., 5.
- Music, equipment, 115.
- Nanking Theological Seminary, 1, 4, 7, 9, 118, 191, 205, 232.
- Nanking Theological Seminary, Rural Church Dept., 1, 10, 27, 164, 176 ftn., 234.
- National Agricultural Research Bureau, 58.
- National Christian Council, 3, 204, 225, 229.
- National Committee for Christian Religious Education, 142, 191, 225.
- National Government, 237.
- National holidays, 215.

INDEX

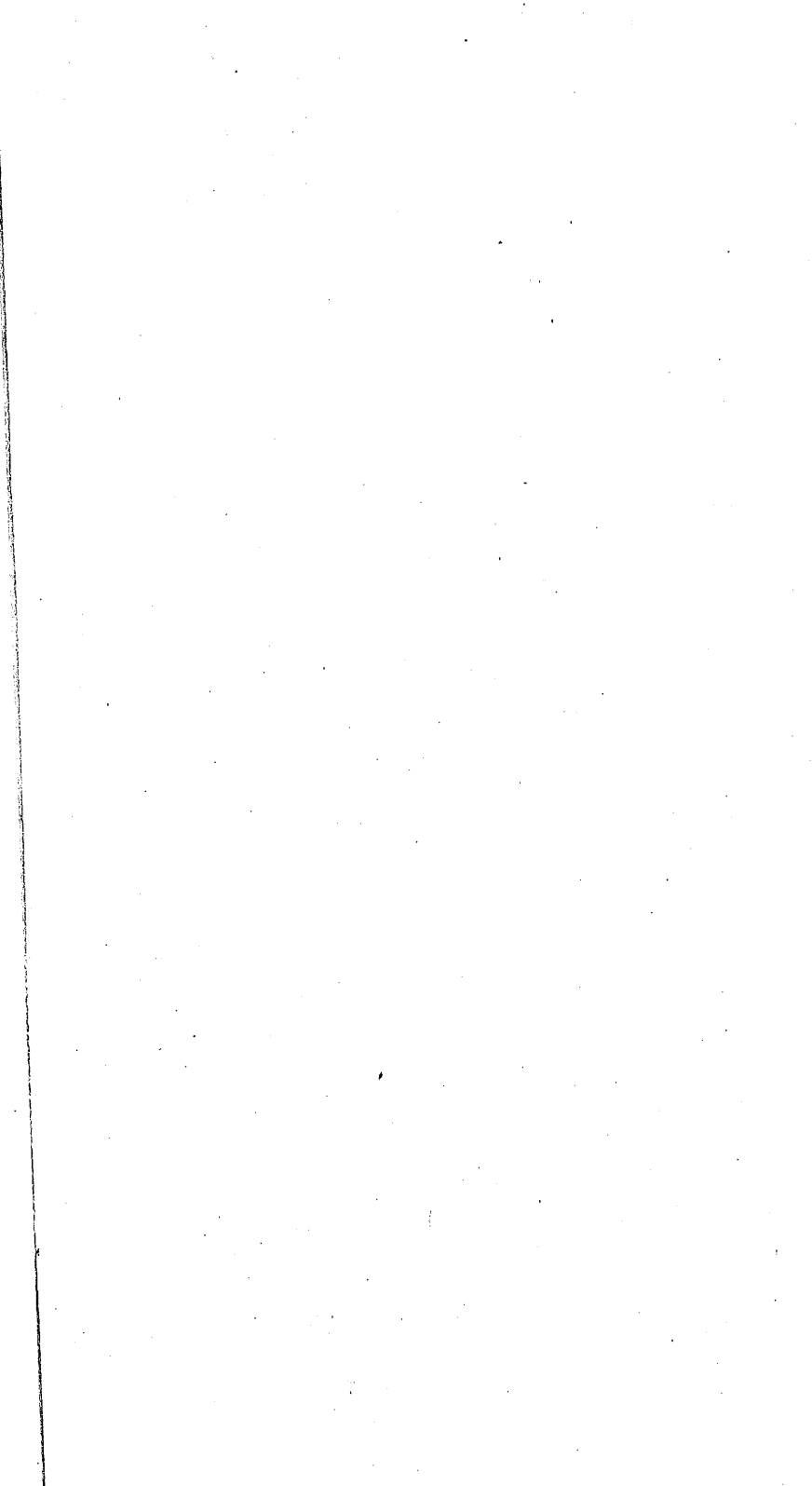
- National Holiness Mission, 25.
Nationalism, 52.
Nevius, John L., 143.
Nevius plan, 143, 144.
North China Christian Rural Service Union, 225, 235, 239.
Northern Baptist Mission, 26, 234.
Occupations, church members, 98-99.
Organization and program, 223.
Paotingfu, 177.
Peiping Theological Seminary, 118.
Peiyin Methodist Church, 237-239.
Persecutions, 92.
Phonetic system, 176.
Pickett, J. W., 5.
Political factors, 51-52.
Population of China, 3, 19, 47; age distribution, 50; agrarian population, 48, 51; birth rate, 49; death rate, 49; density, 47, 48; distribution, 48-49; growth, 49, 51; migration, 51; sex distribution, 50.
Postal facilities, 66-67.
Post-war conditions, 235-239.
Preaching and evangelism, 209.
Presbyterian Church in China, 25.
Presbyterian Mission, U.S. (South), 18, 20, 156, 231.
Presbyterian Mission, U.S.A. (North), 20, 145, 155.
Price, P. Frank, 176.
Primary Schools, 173-174.
"Project Plan," 156.
Property, 88; construction and repairs, 149, 152; damage by war, 229; property and equipment, 113-117.
Public health, 64; agencies, 65.
Rawlinson, Frank, 6.
Recreation, 62-64; cost, 62; prevalence of various types, 62-64.
Reformed Church in America, 155.
Rehabilitation, 240-241.
Reisner, John H., vii, 9, 235, 240.
Religion of peasants, 76.
Religious art, 114, 116.
Religious conditions, 76-81.
Religious drama, 194-195.
Religious education, 174-209; achievements and failures, 199-200; curricula, 196; difficulties, 201; drama, 194-195; emphasis, 198; group meetings, 193-194; importance of, 223; normal classes, 194; reading schedule, 192; training through activities, 194.
Religious education in family, 201-205; Christian memorial services, 203-204; parent education, 204; use of literature, 203.
Religious expenditures, 79.
Religious freedom, 236-237.
Religious music, 114-115.
Resident pastor or preacher, 121, 123-137.
Rethinking Missions, 224-225.
Roads, 66.
Roman Catholic Churches, 80, 81.
Romanization system, 103.
Rural church in China: after the war, 235-239; age, 1, 85, 86; beginnings, 85-86, 87-88; behind fighting lines, 235; closing of churches, 88; definition, 13-14; during and after the war, 227-241; events of interest in history, 92; future development, 239, 240; growth during war, 230-232; growth in West China during war, 232-234; in Communist areas, 236-237; leaders, 19; location, 40-41; membership, 19, 20, 26, 27, 90; membership growth, 19; organized congregations, 18; parish, 19, 39, 40, 43; population of parish, 41-42; reasons for founding, 87; rehabilitation of 240-241; relation of market and parish area, 43; rural and non-rural members, 20; self-support, 20; size of market area, 42; size of parish area, 43; social concern, 223; types, 13-14, 18; written histories, 92.
Rural church, studies of 73 sample churches: church life and work (program), 169-220; finance, 142-168; history, 85-93; leadership and organization, 117-142; membership and constituency, 93-112; property and equipment, 113-117; summary, conclusions and proposals, 221-226.
Rural Church in China, The, first edition (1941), vii; second edition (1948), vii.
Rural community, 33-44; agricultural and industrial factors, 53-55; communication and transportation, 66-67; cultural and educational factors, 67-69; definition, 37, 38, 39, 44; distribution of churches, 80, 81; economic and commercial factors, 55-59; geographical and topographical factors, 46-47;

INDEX

- health 64-66; historical factors, 45-46; leadership, 69-72; moral conditions, 72-76; number in China, 37, 38, political factors, 51-52; population, 37, 47; recreation, 62-64; religious conditions, 76-81; social factors, 59-62; survey of 73 communities, 45-81; types of community, 37-39.
- Rural education, 67-68; cost of, 68.
- Rural parish, 19, 39, 40, 43, 221.
- Rural pastor or preacher, 89, 123-137; activities, 133-135; age, 124; Christian experience, 125; comparison with other salaries, 132-133; experience in ministry, 127-128; family condition, 125, 129; financial difficulties, 132; hobbies, 136; length of service, 128; manse, 131; native home, 124; occupation of father, 125; other sources of support, 132; pastor's wife, 128; pastoral visitation, 201-202; perquisites, 131; political affiliation, 133; salaries, 89, 129-133, 151; terms of service, 89; theological education, 126; training and experience, 126.
- Rural reconstruction, 24, 83-84, 228-229, 239.
- Rural religion, 76-81; prevalence of religious practices, 77-79.
- Sailer, T. H. P., 192 ftm.
- Sanderson, E. D., 38.
- Schermerhorn, Professor, 92.
- Schools, 67-68.
- Secret cults or societies, 80.
- Self-help, 222.
- Self-support, 20, 142-168; achieving, 165-169; advantages, 165-166; conclusion on, 168; definition, 168; difficulties, 166; encouragements, 166-167; proportion of, 158-159; relation to leadership, 167; relation to membership, 167-168.
- Seventh-Day Adventist Church, 26, 80.
- Sexual relations, 61-62.
- Shafer, Luman J., 231.
- Shunhwachen (Rural Training Center of Nanking Theological Seminary), 4, 5 ftm., 44, 51, 100, 103, 156, 177, 208, 231.
- Sign on church building, 113.
- Sino-Japanese War, 8, 227-228; effect upon rural communities, 227-228; upon agriculture, 228; upon church growth, 230-232; upon church leadership, 229-230; upon rural church, 229-235; upon rural church finance, 230; upon rural congregations, 230; upon rural reconstruction, 228-229; upon social life, 228; upon West China, 232-234.
- Smith, Arthur H., 46.
- Social conflicts, 60.
- Social organization, 59.
- Soldiers, 228.
- Southern Baptist Churches, 26.
- Specialists, 122.
- Stewardship training, 157, 161.
- Stuart, W. H., 216 ftm.
- Suchow, Kiangsu, 231.
- Supervision, 118-122.
- Supervisors, 119-120.
- Summary, conclusions, 221-226.
- Sunday attendance, 210-212; obstacles to attendance, 212; reasons for non-attendance, 212.
- Sunday observance, 213-214, 216.
- Sunday program, 210.
- Sunday Schools, 189-191, 207.
- Sundays and other special days, 209-216.
- Superstitions, 77-78, 79.
- Survey of community conditions, 45-81.
- Survey of rural churches, history and scope, 4-7; procedure, 7-9; purpose, 1-2, 5; tabulation, 9.
- Swedish Baptist Mission, 25.
- Szechwan, 38.
- Szechwan churches, survey of, 232-233.
- Tayler, J. B., 39, 44.
- Temples, 76.
- Tithing, 158, 163.
- Tribes, work among, 232.
- Unified Sunday program, 188.
- Union hymnal*, 115.
- United Christian Missionary Society, 20, 25.
- United Church of Canada, 155.
- University of Nanking College of Agriculture, 46.
- U.N.R.R.A., 235.
- U.S.A. rural churches, 95, 122 ftm., 131, 152, 160.
- Volunteer leaders, 137-139.
- Wei, Francis, 239.
- Wei, Mrs. Piyun Gan, 10.

INDEX

- Weigle, Luther A., 10.
- Wells, Ralph C., 6.
- Wenchow, 18.
- West China Union Theological College, 232, 233.
- West China Union University, 232.
- Women, foot-binding, 61; isolation, 61; literacy, 102, 104, 110; organization in church, 193; proportion of in churches, 20, 95; social standing, 60-61; special work for, 209.
- Women evangelists, 136, 137.
- Worship, 209.
- Yen, James, 228.
- Youth, work for, 207.
- Yu Mo-ren, 196.
- Y.W.C.A., 207, 208.



HL-340

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